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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE IN DEVELOPING A MOTIVATED AND COMMITTED STAFF

BY

© CHARLOTTE LEIGH COROTHERS

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Principals' Perceptions of Their Role in Developing a Motivated and Committed Staff" submitted by Charlotte Leigh Corothers in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Date: June 28, 1990

Abstract

Considerable research has been conducted in the areas of motivation and the principalship. This research has produced an extensive amount of literature on motivating teachers; however, it has neglected to examine the concept from the principal's perspective. In the literature, the principal is viewed as the key individual responsible for what transpires at the school level; therefore, it seemed appropriate to research the issue of teacher motivation from the principal's viewpoint. The primary purpose of this study was to explore the understanding five high school principals have of their role in affecting staff motivation. The study examined the characteristics principals identified as being important in a motivated teacher; the factors they viewed as affecting staff morale; the strategies they perceived to be important in encouraging, maintaining, and enhancing teacher motivation; and the larger issues or concerns they illustrated as being related to the concept of staff morale.

A qualitative research method which included using semistructured interviews as the dominant strategy for data collection was employed with the intention of obtaining a rich and comprehensive description of the understanding five high school principals have of their role in affecting teacher motivation.

The research showed that administrators share a common understanding of what it means to be a motivated teacher. In addition, the factors identified as affecting staff morale by these principals appeared to support the literature. The interview data confirmed that intrinsic rewards in teaching have the potential to affect most positively teacher job satisfaction. Other factors such as working conditions, the organization's structure, and the external environment were not viewed as being significant in the final analysis. The participants in the study discussed with some trepidation their concern for educators due to the increase in societal expectations and the aging teaching force. The strategies employed by each individual principal to encourage, maintain, and increase motivation reflected their personal leadership style. This research will be of interest to aspiring administrators because of its "bird's-eye view" of principals' perceptions of teacher motivation. One important implication of this study refers to the need for administrators to possess specific training in personnel management.

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Many people contributed toward the successful completion of this study, and I wish to recognize their support and assistance with sincerest respect and appreciation.

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Throughout the course of my graduate work, there were many friends, colleagues, and family who assisted me along the journey down the long and winding road to the study's completion. I wish to pay tribute to them for their assistance, consultation, and inspiration.

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Chapter 1

The Research Problem

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

The recent focus on school improvement has provided educators with the opportunity to examine practices and look for ways to create more effective organizations. As Dufour (1986) comments:

> If principals from around the country could somehow be granted two professional wishes, their collective list would undoubtedly include working with an enthusiastic, highly motivated staff and meeting the standards of an 'effective school' in terms of student achievement. (p. 33)

Thus, few topics are more important than those that deal with teacher motivation. Sergiovanni (1987) writes that "high teacher motivation to work and strong commitment to work are essential requirements for effective schooling" (p. 235). Sarason (1972) supports this point when he comments that "if teachers, principals and others do not experience intellectual and professional growth on the job, how can they make school learning stimulating and productive for children?" (p. 124). By increasing their understanding of teachers' expectations and perceptions of school life and their behaviors, administrators will be better prepared to improve school practices. The principal is identified as a key person in the promotion of programs and practices that have the intention of improving schools.

Much has been written about the motivation of people, including extensive advice for administrators emphasizing their role in motivating and instilling confidence in teachers about their work and the significant part they play in education. However, few studies have focused on how principals view teacher motivation and how they perceive themselves affecting staff commitment. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to examine the principal's role in motivating teachers from the principal's perspective.

Justification for the Study

The proposed study has both practical and theoretical significance. Consequently, the results should be of interest to those educators involved in both administration and in the development of staff.

The insights derived from this study have the potential to provide administrators at all levels with a perspective on the importance of the concept of motivation and a greater understanding of the actions necessary for the improvement of staff morale and the factors which affect staff motivation. For those who are concerned about the success of schools, the sustaining and maintaining of the development of human resources is seen as essential to the survival and growth of school effectiveness. The challenge facing administrators and leaders is the need to access and to implement strategic plans and actions to motivate staff members. The implications of the study will provide the necessary direction for those in leadership roles.

The concept of motivation and commitment is abstract, multidimensional, and difficult to define. As a result, the initial findings are intended to make a contribution to the literature pertaining to motivation by probing for an increased understanding and awareness of the factors and perceptions relating to this concept.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to develop an understanding of what actions high school principals take to affect staff motivation and commitment. More specifically, the following questions served to guide the development of the study and the analysis of the data:

1. What do principals perceive as being the important characteristics of a motivated staff?
2. What do principals understand to be the factors that affect staff morale?
3. What strategies do principals employ to motivate their staff?
4. What issues and concerns do principals identify in terms of staff motivation and commitment?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined in order to provide a common understanding:

Motivation. Owens (1987) defines motivation as a complex internal state often described as all those inner striving conditions such as wishes, desires, drives, needs, etc., that we cannot observe directly but that affect behavior. Without motivation there would be no purposive, organized behavior by the individual either at work or elsewhere. Motivation directs or channels behavior as it provides a goal orientation. According to Owens, "motivation of subordinates and associates is a pivotal concern for virtually all supervisors, administrators and managers" (p. 92).

Morale. Webster's Dictionary defines morale as a "sense of common purpose with respect to a group or 'esprit de corps.'"

Commitment. Commitment refers to intense positive involvement (Hoy & Miskel, 1987).

Assumptions

The major assumptions underlying the problem to be researched in this study were:

1. that staff motivation and commitment were important concepts in high schools and, therefore, there was a need to better understand them;
2. that high school principals possessed an overall vision of what a motivated staff means for them; and
3. that high school principals both unconsciously and consciously employed strategies to motivate their staff.

Delimitations and Limitations

This study was delimited to the reactions and perceptions of five principals in four urban school districts. A limitation of this study was that the data were collected solely from interviews. The interview presented limitations in that it required participants to be both candid and truthful on a topic that could be viewed as potentially sensitive. However, this was not considered to be a serious limitation in that the participants were chosen for their willingness to share their perceptions, feelings, and views.

Summary and Organization of the Thesis

This chapter introduced the context of the research problem by outlining the objectives of the research and by providing a rationale for the study. The problem was introduced and the research questions were specified. In addition, the significance of the study was outlined, and basic assumptions, delimitations, and limitations were discussed.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 includes a synthesis of the research on teacher motivation, a discussion of the effective schools model, a review of the available material on the principal's role in motivating teachers, and a presentation of the factors identified in the literature that affect teacher motivation. In Chapter 3 the methodology, research procedures, and data-collection techniques used in the study are outlined. Chapter 4 provides a content analysis of the interview data relating to the research questions, and Chapter 5 highlights the themes that emerged from the analysis of the data. In Chapter 6, the final chapter of the thesis, the major findings are described, along with personal reflections and implications for practice and future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

The presentation of related literature and theory is divided into the following main sections: (1) motivation theory and research; (2) effective schools model; (3) the principal's role in motivating and developing staff commitment; (4) teacher motivation; and (5) conceptual framework.

A review of motivation theory and research provides a theoretical framework from which to begin a discussion of staff motivation. The current literature on effective schools emphasizes what successful school leaders do to build effective, healthy schools. In order to understand fully the role of the principal in motivating and developing staff commitment, the factors that teachers identify as being significant to their motivation will also be examined.

The conceptual framework grows out of the literature review and constitutes the guiding structure for this research study.

Motivation Theory and Research

Defining Motivation

A major difficulty in defining motivation occurs because the concept has been used to relate to a variety of topics. Typically, definitions include other concepts such as drive, need, incentive, reward, reinforcement, goal setting, and expectancy. In general, theorists have agreed that motivation refers to "a process that guides individual choices among different forms of voluntary activities" (Miskel, 1982,

p. 66). Miskel stated that most definitions of motivation include three components. The first involves energizing human behavior in order to lead people to behave in a certain manner as a result of activating forces such as environmental cues or internal memory and affective responses. The second component directs or channels the behavior by providing a goal orientation for the individual. The third aspect of motivation maintains and sustains the behavior, suggesting that the surrounding environment has the potential to reinforce the intensity and direction of individual drives or forces. Combining the components produces the general definition that motivation is "the complex forces, drives, needs, tension states, or other mechanisms that start and maintain voluntary activity toward the achievement of personal goals" (p. 66).

More recent research discusses internal motivation as the compelling force in producing a high level of commitment to work (Rosenholtz, 1989, p. 139). Rosenholtz stated that where people are highly motivated, their feelings are closely tied to how well they perform; good performance is self-rewarding and provides incentive for continuing to perform well. Conversely, poor performance is an occasion for distress that causes internally motivated people to search for ways to avoid such feelings in the future and to regain those pleasurable feelings that accompany good performance. When people experience low internal motivation, they suffer feelings of alienation and disaffection from work and engage in a variety of behaviors that produce self-fulfilling prophesies affecting their ability to acquire performance-based rewards. The literature seems to say that people are best motivated to work towards goals that they have been involved in setting and to which they feel committed.

Motivation Theory Models

The literature in educational administration that deals with models of motivation has been classified into content theories and process theories (Miskel, 1982, p. 67). Content models of motivation include primarily need theories, such as Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory. Content theories endeavor to identify what energizes or initiates behavior and are less concerned with explaining how the process occurs. In contrast, process models try to explain how behavior is started, sustained at a particular level, and then stopped. Several process theories appear with some frequency in the current work motivation literature. Most of these theories are concerned with cognitive processes such as expectancy and goal setting.

Content Theories

Need hierarchy model. Maslow (1943) suggested that it was useful to think of human needs as being at five different levels in a hierarchy. The needs hierarchy theory contains two fundamental postulates: first, that individuals are "wanting" creatures in that their needs constitute the main impetus behind their behavior; and second, that needs are common to everybody and are arranged in a hierarchy of prepotency. This is to say that the more powerful a need is, the more it commands attention over other needs in the human consciousness and demands to be satisfied. The majority of people's needs at the first three levels--physiological, security, and social--are regularly satisfied and no longer have much motivational effect. However, the higher level needs of esteem and self-actualization are rarely achieved. Research in a school setting based on

Maslow's theory indicates that the largest deficiencies for professional educators were concerned specifically with the higher-level needs related to esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization (Trusty & Sergiovanni, 1966). Maslow's theory continues to enjoy wide acceptance in education, despite growing criticism that it lacks empirical support (Miskel, 1982).

Two-factor theory. Another popular content theory of motivation--the two-factor or motivation-hygiene theory--was proposed by Herzberg (1966). This theory postulates that one set of intrinsic factors called "motivators"--which make reference to achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement--produce satisfaction. Another extrinsic set labelled "hygiene factors" refers to interpersonal relations with superiors and peers, technical supervision, working conditions, and personal life, and which when not gratified produce dissatisfaction.

Many replications of Herzberg's (1966) study have been made in educational settings (Sergiovanni, 1967; Schmidt, 1976) supporting the original findings that work satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposites but are separate and distinct dimensions of a person's attitude about work. Sergiovanni (1987) stated that if principals do not address these "motivators," teachers will not be motivated to work but will not necessarily be dissatisfied either. They will perform up to a certain level considered satisfactory but will make little or no effort to exceed this level. In addition, if hygiene factors are not attended to by principals, corresponding feelings of teacher job dissatisfaction and poor performance will emerge.

There is evidence of a growing consensus among researchers that the two-factor theory be abandoned (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1977; Campbell, 1970;

Steers & Porter, 1979). For example, Steers and Porter stated that "Herzberg filled a void in the late 1950's by calling attention to the need for an improved understanding of the roles played by motivation in work organizations. The approach was systematic and the language was understandable" (p. 73). Miskel (1982) proposed that educational administration researchers should reduce their reliance on the model with "mindless replications" and should consider process models such as the expectancy theory which would improve the knowledge base in the field (p. 73).

Process Theories

Expectancy theory. Since the mid-1960s expectancy theory as a process approach has occupied a prominent place in the study of motivation to work. Originally popularized by Vroom (1966), the expectancy model is a contingency approach to motivation that takes into account the differences in the desires and needs of teachers (Sergiovanni, 1987). Vroom's theory views motivation as a response to an individual's need to achieve a specific goal. Performance on the job, in his view, is a means by which the individual can achieve a personal goal.

Motivation takes place when outcomes or rewards being offered are perceived by the individual as being desirable, when an individual knows what needs to be done to obtain desired outcomes, and when the individual feels confident in being able to do what is necessary and is given the assistance needed to perform adequately.

Miskel, Defrain, and Wilcox (1980) concluded from their study of secondary and higher education teachers that, in order to be motivated, teachers need to believe that they will be successful in doing what is necessary to obtain desired rewards. These researchers advise administrators to provide the conditions that enhance anticipation by teachers of rewards they consider to be important.

Hoy and Miskel (1987) maintained that the results of investigations in educational settings are similar to those most commonly reported in the literature for other organizational settings. The expectancy model is a good predictor of job satisfaction and a not-so-good but still significant one for performance, and has emerged as a popular model to explain work motivation. Hoy and Miskel stated that most research supports the theory that "people work hard when they think that working hard is likely to lead to desirable rewards from the organization" (p. 192).

Goal theory. Locke (1968) and his associates originally formulated goal theory or the technique of goal setting as an approach to work motivation. The theory became increasingly popular during the 1970s as a process approach to work motivation. To explain goal theory, Locke proposed a model with seven components. Five of the components serve to energize behavior, and two maintain and regulate behavior. Goal theory assumes that most human action is purposive, and that behavior is regulated and maintained by goals and intentions. The most fundamental effects of goals on mental or physical actions are directive in nature. They guide thoughts and overt behavior to one end rather than another. Since pursuit of some goals requires greater mental concentration and physical effort than others, goals, in the process of directing action, also regulate energy expenditure.

Several important school practices are implicitly based on goal theory. Many evaluation systems for teachers and administrators are modifications of a management by objectives (MBO) technique, and behavioral objectives are frequently used to guide decisions on instructional procedures and course content. In an educational context, administrators and teachers jointly define their common goals in terms of expected outcomes. These outcomes can then be used to assess each member's contributions. This approach assumes that if employees are given responsibility for developing personal goals in relation to the organization's goals, encouraged to have autonomy over achieving their goals, and involved in methods for evaluating their achievement, they will work harder and be more effective in their job.

Hoy and Miskel (1987, p. 193) outlined four generalizations about goal theory based on the research in this area. First, specific performance goals elicit a higher level of performance than general goals. Second, the more difficult the performance goal, the more effort individuals will make if they accept it. Third, subordinate participation in goal-setting activities as opposed to goal setting by the supervisor alone leads to employee satisfaction though it may not increase performance. Finally, goal setting and feedback combine to enhance employee motivation.

Goal theory offers powerful predictions for simple jobs with concrete, measurable outcomes. It is less effective when tasks are complex and dimensions cannot be measured quantitatively. As Miskel (1982) stated, "goal setting techniques complement and enhance other theories of work motivation, including expectancy theory" (p. 79).

Job characteristics model. Another recent theory of work motivation is the job characteristics model as exemplified by Hackman and Oldham's (1980) theory of job enrichment. It was constructed on three concepts or psychological states found to be critical in determining a person's work motivation and job satisfaction: meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of results. According to the job characteristics model, when these psychological states are experienced, the individual performs better and is motivated internally. Internal work motivation occurs as a result of the positive feelings an individual experiences from performing effectively. Hackman and Oldham found that the content of one's job is an important critical determiner of internal work motivation. Further, by improving or enriching certain characteristics of one's job, internal work motivation can be increased.

Sergiovanni (1987, p. 250) summarized the relevance of the job characteristics model by stating that it provides principals with a conceptual framework allowing them to make informed decisions about the nature and structure of the work of teaching. In this way, principals would be better able to help teachers feel that their job is meaningful, to enable teachers to learn the actual outcomes of their efforts, to provide teachers with feelings of control and responsibility over results, and to assist teachers in becoming part of a social unit. Sergiovanni viewed these conditions as being related to high intrinsic work motivation, increases in quality performance, high job satisfaction, and lower absence and turnover rates.

Miskel (1982, p. 80) pointed out that the job characteristics model is not a complete theory of motivation. For example, individual differences exist among people, and how best to define, measure, and include variations among individuals in the model remains open to question.

Reward Systems

Incentives, the organizational counterpart to individual motivation, are rewards, reinforcers, or inducements that employees receive from the organization to encourage them to be productive members. Despite the imprecision of what constitutes extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, educators have found the distinction between these two terms to be useful in thinking about incentives. Lortie (1975), too, separated extrinsic rewards, such as "money, income, level of prestige, and power over others," from intrinsic or "psychic" rewards that are consisted entirely of subjective valuations made in the course of work (p. 101). Lortie also mentioned "ancillary" rewards which tend to be stable through time and are often "taken for granted" rather than being specified in contracts. He cited as examples the economic security and scheduling of teaching (p. 101).

From an array of definitions, then, extrinsic rewards refer to incentives provided by the organization or other people, and intrinsic rewards or incentives are those mediated within the individual. Extrinsic factors include recognition, money, promotion, harassment, low-ability students, and well-behaved students. On the other hand, examples of intrinsic factors encompass feelings of accomplishment, achievement, and competence. Hoy and Miskel (1987) concluded that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards have "reciprocal effects and both represent effective methods of energizing and maintaining behavior" (p. 199).

Herzberg's (1966) "motivator" factors are primary in causing satisfaction, and his "hygiene" factors are the major causes of unhappiness on the job. Pay does not motivate, Herzberg argues, but can be the source of dissatisfaction. Lortie (1975, p. 106) found teachers' primary motivators to be the intrinsic rewards of having "reached" their students, while the conditions that they complained most about (clerical duties, interruptions and time pressures, and extra duties) were those that interfered most with achieving those intrinsic rewards. He concluded that intrinsic rewards may be much more meaningful as motivators than extrinsic and ancillary rewards since they were related to the efforts made by teachers to obtain them. According to Lortie, effort increases task-related satisfactions. Teachers concentrate on the intrinsic factors because they feel their decisions can make a difference in their work.

Similarly, in his study of high school teachers, Spuck (1974) found that "extrinsic and ancillary rewards are important to inducing teachers to join the system and remain in the system," but are unlikely to affect the effort teachers exert on a day-to-day basis (p. 22). Intrinsic rewards are those which teachers value and which result in the fusing of product and process. In this way, intrinsic rewards are seen as being related to job performance, reduced absenteeism, improved peer and superordinate relations, and, in particular, effectiveness of the teacher's classroom behavior. Research suggested that most teachers need to feel a sense of personal accomplishment if they are to persevere in the difficult work of teaching (Johnson, 1986, p. 60). The key to motivating teacher behaviors is in understanding desired rewards and providing for these needs to be met in pursuit of organizational goals. Discovering what matters to teachers and how best to motivate them for sustained and improved work is apparently a complicated puzzle, one that is yet to be solved.

Implications for practice can be drawn from motivation theory.

However, the intent of this review of motivation theories is to establish a framework of ideas and a description of terms that may or may not be referred to by the participants of this study in their discussions about staff motivation and commitment. School administrators are interested in the question of how they can motivate their staff. Theories of work motivation do not provide simple unequivocal answers, but they do offer many suggestions and techniques for improving administrative practice. An understanding of motivation theory increases the knowledge about why people behave as they do and it may also foster an appreciation of the effects of certain administrative actions.

Effective Schools Model

The literature on school effectiveness and school success emphasizes the role of the principal. Much of the research asserts that the key to quality schooling is the amount and kind of leadership that the school principal provides (Sergiovanni, 1987). A brief review of some of the aspects of effective schools that pertain to motivating and developing staff commitment provides a basis within which the role of the principal may be examined in greater detail.

Most recently, Rosenholtz (1989, p. 2) outlined four measures of organizational effectiveness: (1) a school's problem-solving and renewal capabilities; (2) the satisfaction of individual needs and organizational tasks; (3) maintaining the motivation and values of the school; and (4) school productivity. Rosenholtz emphasized the importance of the structures and processes that influence schools in determining why effective schools work. Her research pointed out that the distinguishing feature of effective schools is their social organization.

Particularly significant in understanding the depth of detail that characterizes life in successful schools is the research of Lipsitz (1984). In summarizing her work in successful middle schools, she put forth the following conclusions about principal leadership and school characteristics:

> - unusual clarity about the purposes
> - everyone can articulate what the school stands for
> - confidence in the mission
> - the principals define and proclaim the school as special within and throughout the community
> - made to feel like chosen people, staff and students have banded together in their specialness and achieved accordingly
> - the principals have a driving vision
> - through their vision and practicality principals articulate for their schools a collective ideology that defines an organization's identity and purposes
> - it is the principals' job to sustain the faculty's commitment
> - the major contribution of the principals is to make the schools larger than one person
> - the principals are good enough to leave a legacy behind
> - most striking is the level of caring in these schools
> - most striking is the lack of adult isolation in these schools
> - teachers have high expectations of themselves and believe that they make a difference
> - the principals have been driven, energetic workers, committed to establishing the best possible school environment
> - the principals' authority is derived from their acknowledged competence
> - the schools have in common highly autonomous teachers
> - these driven and sometimes defiant principals are not alone responsible for their schools' success nor are they indispensable. (pp. 167-202)

Lipsitz's (1984) research demonstrated the essential role the principal plays in establishing the life in successful schools.

Rosenholtz (1985) explained school effectiveness in terms of a heavy emphasis on the ideas of certainty and organizational goals. She related school excellence to rational planning and action where principals, because of their certainty that it can be done, mobilize teachers with common objectives toward which they can collectively aim. Effective principals arm their schools with a full command of teaching strategies developed through collaborative efforts, with maximum time, materials, and technical assistance to implement them, and with professional confidence. According to Rosenholtz (1985, p. 381), the following takes place: Clear directions emerge toward which teachers can point their energies for improvement; a shared reason for professional dialogue among teachers develops; a basis exists for teachers to know when their efforts have succeeded; and some form of collectively issued recognition is established for when progress is made. In summary, the effective schools literature stresses that the key to these schools' success is strong administrators with a vision and with the ability to carry out their vision in such a way as to make an enormous difference in a school. Critical to an understanding of the role of the principal in motivating and developing staff commitment are the strategies or actions used by principals to create an environment which sustains a staff's commitment.

The Principal's Role in Motivating and Developing Staff Commitment

Research on the role of the principal in motivating and developing staff commitment is not extensive. Much of the literature refers to the role of the principal in all-encompassing terms. However, by extracting pertinent segments from various research, the pieces seem to fit together and thus provide some insight into how principals motivate teachers.

Principals as People People

Wolcott's (1973) ethnographic investigation of one elementary school principal provided a basis for examining how principals perform. In a highly oversimplified statement, one might say the principal's job is a matter of dealing with "people and their problems." As Wolcott found, the principal spent about 65 percent of his day in face-to-face encounters, thus emphasizing the interpersonal element of the principal's position.

This idea is further expanded in Moylan's (1988) research of an effective elementary school principal. She indicated that the principal who reveals eight different characteristics of performance in being an educational administrator--enabler, empathizer, challenger, advocate, collaborator, image maker, loyalist and tactician--also possesses a clear understanding of the role and the responsibilities of the principalship. One overarching quality that appears to permeate all eight of these facets is the interrelatedness of the teacher-administrator relationship.

Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) maintained that what ultimately appears to be necessary is a "mutually supportive administrative-faculty relationship" (p. 110). They further proposed that it is essential for school principals to cultivate the active support of teachers by demonstrating that they care about teachers and by following through on their commitments. Principals communicate caring by listening to faculty and by involving teachers in decision making.

Greenfield (1987) more recently stated that "the nature of the relationship among the adults who inhabit a school has more to do with a school's quality and character, with the accomplishment of its pupils and the professionalism of its teachers, than any other factor" (p. 250). For Greenfield, the success of a school can often be said to be dependent upon teacher-teacher and teacher-administrator interactions, and it is the school principal who is seemingly the most appropriate individual to influence these relationships.

Morris, Crowson, Porter-Gehrie, and Hurvitz (1984) supported the need for a balanced relationship among the adults of a school's staff. It seems imperative, then, that principals concentrate on communicating role performance expectations, fulfilling teacher expectations regarding professional autonomy, and developing and maintaining a reward system for cooperative behavior. The principal is expected to "create that intangible something, that ambiance of mind and spirit which encourages effective teaching and learning" (p. 83).

Leithwood (1986) wrote about a general-purpose strategy of "building and maintaining relationships, and motivating staff and students" (p. 75) characteristic of the secondary school principal. Principals must involve staff in decisions and activities, striving to have the whole staff function as a team and in this way foster a sense of ownership for decisions and for the school. By participating in a variety of activities with staff, such as professional development, curriculum planning, teaching, and supervision, principals endeavor to engender a common sense of purpose, mutual understanding, respect, and commitment.

Principals who are positive and cheerful and who encourage staff, according to Leithwood (1986), are able to challenge and instill confidence in teachers and rejuvenate staff by showing interest in them. By being available to staff, principals ensure that all staff feel comfortable in tackling problems and meeting challenges. Principals who exhibit honesty, directness, and sincerity with staff endeavor to reinforce their philosophy of education and the goals of the school. Finally, by acting as an enthusiastic, caring, and consistent role model for staff, principals live out the expectations that they feel are important in the school.

Principals As Managers of Motivation

Fox's (1986) study was one of the few research projects that examined specifically the principal's ability to provide the conditions for teacher motivation. In all, thirteen conclusions reached by Fox (pp. 18-19) serve to emphasize the significance of the principal's role in contributing to increased staff motivation.

Motivation to teach occurs when teaching is seen by the teacher as (1) worthwhile, and if the task is (2) stimulating. Teachers want to feel (3) a sense of involvement in decision making in the school, while at the same time (4) experiencing a degree of independence in their classrooms. The teacher must have (5) a feeling of affiliation with others in the school, including the principal. There must be (6) a reward system established, offering both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

Teachers need to feel (7) a sense of success in their work and (8) recognition from students, parents, colleagues, and supervisors for their efforts. Teachers require (9) accurate, honest, and professional feedback. They need (10) opportunities for personal and professional growth both within the classroom and in the profession.

Teachers also require (11) an organizational structure which provides physical and emotional safety for all participants and which reduces distractions of classroom teaching. Teachers need to feel (12) confidence in the principal. It is necessary that the principal be seen as competent and as one who facilitates the teachers' job of instruction. Teachers also require (13) the principal to provide an adequate supply and effective use of resources for teaching.

Some notable comments made by Peters (cited in Koerner, 1988), author of _In Search of Excellence_, in a recent interview emphasized the need to focus on the school principal as both manager and leader of staff motivation. In this interview, Peters proposed that the key characteristics of a successful school leader involve two skills that can be put on a continuum.

> On the one hand, at the highest level of abstraction, the point is to create an exciting vision about what an institution can be, whether it's a secondary school, university or steel mill or grocery store. It's the ability to paint a picture, to describe an attractive future that gets other people turned on. At the lowest level of abstraction, it's people who are good listeners and understand that the school will be only as good as the involvement, not only of the students, but also of their teachers.

In the interview, Peters (cited in Koerner, 1988) described motivation in terms of "getting people engaged, involved, committed and excited about a useful vision." He sees the role of the principal as that of a facilitator and an empowerer, basically, "people people." The principal must focus on people who are ready to move by asking, listening, cajoling, nudging, but never telling. In this way the principal leads his or her staff to learn things that they would never have dreamed they were capable of learning. Peters commented, "The best leaders are people who just get an unbelievable kick out of watching a teacher try something they've never tried before and succeed at it, or fail at it and learn from it" (p. 45). For Peters, the ability to listen and to show respect enables the principal to make the jump from "manager-as-expert" to "manager-as-setter" of a climate and involve others in pursuit of a worthy and exciting vision.

Vaill's (1984) research discussed the importance of school climate and the influence of the concept of "thrust" (p. 93). The concept of thrust, defined as "the energy and drive exhibited by principals at work," was first included in the findings of Halpin and Croft's (1962,

p. 262). By behaving with high thrust, principals model energy, drive, and commitment, on the one hand, and communicate what they see as important, on the other. Highly visible principals who spend time in classrooms and who consult with teachers about their teaching communicate a sense of what is important and significant.

Vaill (1984) found that the leaders of successful organizations he studied shared three common characteristics related to thrust: (1) they put in extraordinary amounts of time; (2) they had strong feelings about the attainment of the system's purpose; and (3) they focused on key issues and variables. Vaill stated that "there are of course many nuances, subtleties, and specialists connected with the leadership of many high-performing systems, but over and over again, Time, Feeling and Focus appear no matter what else appears" (p. 94). Vaill explained that successful leaders, including principals, are not afraid of hard work, and they put in a great deal of time. However, they tend to concentrate their efforts on those characteristics and values that are clearly more important to the success of their organization, ensuring all the while that they do not take on everything. As involved managers, they bring to their system a certain passion that affects others deeply.

In his studies of the principalship and school leadership, Greenfield (1985) discussed the need for principals to be more passionate about their work and clearer about what they want to accomplish. Greenfield defined passion as "believing in the worth of what one seeks to accomplish and exhibiting in one's daily action a commitment to the realization of those goals and purposes" (p. 17). He maintained that clarity about goals and outcomes should be accompanied by a commitment to flexibility regarding processes and procedures.

In summary, the literature on the principal's role in motivating staff presents an interesting analysis of the kinds of actions successful leaders incorporate into their practice, all the while striving for excellence. Although not referred to as such, these "strategies" are based on the premise that the principalship is a "human" activity, and that the various techniques employed by principals must include developing strong administrator-staff relationships by communicating with and involving staff. Principals most successful in motivating staff are excited, creative, energetic, passionate leaders who endeavor to provide conditions that emphasize the principals' role in motivating and developing staff commitment.

Teacher Motivation

The strategies that principals use to affect staff motivation and commitment relate to an overriding concern to meet teacher needs. Much of the literature on teacher motivation emphasizes that teachers value and are motivated by many different factors. A great deal of research has been carried out in determining which factors are most effective in motivating teachers.

Such factors as collegiality, intrinsic rewards, mastery of subject matter, and working with young people are frequently mentioned (Engelking, 1987). Also identified as motivational for teachers are opportunities for achievement, opportunities for professional growth and advancement, and recognition for a job well done (Dodd, 1986; Frase, Hetzel, & Grant, 1982). As reported by Silver (1982), "the more frequently teachers receive praise, interesting responsibilities, growth opportunities and chances for advancement as results of excellent teaching, the more likely they will be to perceive good teaching as instrumental in attaining these desirable indirect outcomes" (p. 553).

Barth (1987) researched further the professionalism of teaching. His concern in this area led him to identify several concerns that affected the level of satisfaction that teachers experienced in their daily work life. The significant factors necessary in creating what Barth referred to as an "ecology of reflection, growth and professionalism" (p. 553) are based on the following elements relevant to a relationship between teachers and principal: collegiality, making important decisions, sharing schoolwide responsibilities, honoring the visions of teachers, promoting the teacher as learner and mentor, and establishing teacher quality control.

Rosenholtz (1989) examined the conditions in the social organization of schools that convince teachers to remain in the workplace and to contribute productively to schools. She argued that these productive contributions were related directly to the professional fulfillment teachers derived from their work. Rosenholtz identified three conditions as being necessary for such fulfillment. First, teachers must experience "task autonomy and discretion" (p. 164), which refers to the idea that achieving work goals results directly from purposive actions or intentional efforts on the part of teachers. Secondly, if teachers' rewards do not outweigh their frustrations, particularly in their relationships with students, work tends to lose its meaning, and alienation increases significantly. The final condition includes establishing learning opportunities that increase teachers' talents and instructional strategies in order to better control their environment, to combat professional stagnation, and to allow for continuous progress and growth.

Rosenholtz (1989) also pointed out that teachers must learn "to push forward so they might live at the peak of their potential" because, as she writes, "moving teachers tend to bring back new visions, fresh starts and blazing hopes" (p. 164). Rosenholtz clarified this image with the following comments:

> Teachers' regard for their work--their sense of optimism, hope, and commitment--tends to reside in workplace conditions that enable them to feel professionally empowered and self-fulfilled, that keep them reaching for new teaching challenges, fresh opportunities and ever-expanding technical knowledge. On the other hand, teachers' terminal boredom, the loss of their original meaning, their overwhelming sense of unappreciation and their lack of professional empowerment costs stuck [sic] schools dearly; they usurp teachers' capacity to dream. (p. 165)

Other research on staff motivation (Farber, 1982; Greenfield & Blase, 1982; Kaiser, 1981; McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978) referred to such concerns as teacher burnout and stress, apathy, isolation, staff cutbacks, limited funding, an erosion of the work ethic, criticism of teachers, and a maturing staff as either contributors to a decrease in motivation or as consequences of a lack of teacher vitality.

Farber's (1982) research in this area is of particular interest. He concluded, as a result of his study of what motivates suburban teachers, that "particularly vulnerable are those at a certain age level (34-44), those teaching at a junior high school level, and those teaching in schools with many (more than 1,000) students" (p. 13). Teachers in their thirties or forties were most involved in putting down "final roots," according to Farber, in the sense of committing themselves to their profession, values, family, and community and were most vulnerable to self-doubts regarding the wisdom of their career choice. This group, too, wrote Farber, was most "locked into" teaching--feeling too old and unprepared to change careers, yet too young to think about retirement. Farber also indicated that teachers working in large schools felt more stressed by their work and that this was partly due to the fact that the potential for problems was probably greater and the establishment of a schoolwide or communitywide support network was more difficult.

McLaughlin and Marsh's (1978) work discussed the "calcifying" (p. 84) effect of teaching. They suggested that the passage of time on a job seems to diminish teachers' capacity to change and appears to dampen their enthusiasm for innovations and for teaching. Teachers seem to "peak out" after five to seven years of teaching and may become less effective.

Fris' (1987) more recent survey of school executives concluded that it was a challenge for administrators to keep teachers motivated, "to have them continue to feel positive about themselves, keep up to date, keep their lives intact and to see that reasonable demands are met" (p. 20). So many of the factors discussed above, according to Fris, have tended to create an atmosphere in which teachers feel threatened by new ideas to change, overburdened by family and school responsibilities, and frustrated at the lack of enthusiastic new teacher graduates entering the profession.

In summary, a number of studies, including those of Bird and Little (1985) and Lieberman and Miller (1984), claimed that the workplace and how tasks are designed and managed within it have a great deal to do with work motivation and commitment. Most research seemed to suggest that administrators must begin by understanding the workplace conditions of teaching and the factors that shape them in order to maintain and enhance staff motivation. Rosenholtz (1989) stressed that "of the many resources required by schools, the most vital are the contributions--of effort, involvement and commitment--from teachers" (p. 140). Critical to a school's quality is the ability of its leaders to motivate teachers to make continuing contributions. From the teachers' perspective, efforts by administrators that encourage professional effectiveness, self-motivation, attachment and commitment, challenge seeking, and self-actualization are viewed as most essential (Nicholson, 1988).

Conceptual Framework

Three assumptions underlying the role of the principal in staff motivation are represented in the conceptual framework of this study as shown in Figure 1. The first assumption is that principals possess a vision or perception of what characterizes a motivated staff (Box A). A second assumption is that this understanding includes an awareness and knowledge of those factors affecting staff motivation (Box B). And, thirdly, in order to develop, maintain, and encourage a motivated staff, principals employ certain strategies or actions to ensure staff motivation (Box C).

The three assumptions will serve to guide the development of the study and the analysis of the data by providing a framework for examining the concept of staff motivation and the high school principal. Three issues--factors affecting staff motivation, characteristics of a motivated staff, and strategies used by principals to affect staff motivation--will establish the parameters within which to research the principal's role in motivating staff.

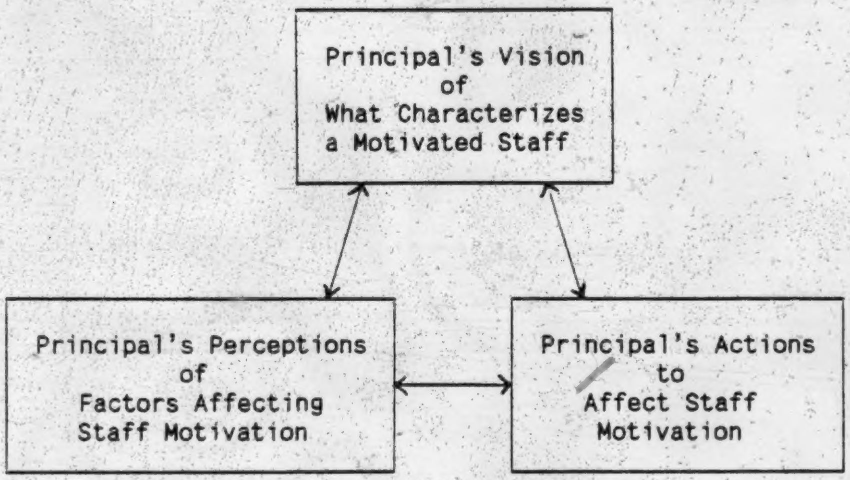
Principal's Vision of What Characterizes a Motivated Staff
Principal's Perceptions of Factors Affecting Staff Motivation
Principal's Actions to Affect Staff Motivation

Figure 1. Conceptual bases for principals' role in staff motivation.

Summary

This review of literature related to motivation provides a background and framework for research on the principal's role in motivating and developing staff commitment. First, the research on motivation theory established a theoretical knowledge base from which to study the principal-teacher relationship. On examining research in the area of staff motivation, it became evident that much of the literature pertained directly to those factors that affect teachers' motivation to work. More and more research, particularly the research related to effective schools, concerned the role principals play in creating successful schools which are characterized by highly motivated teachers. A great deal of the findings referred to in the literature discuss strategies or techniques that administrators must consider if they are to understand fully what motivates teachers and what exactly teachers value.

The chapter concluded with the conceptual framework which identified the parameters for examining how principals motivate and develop staff commitment, the issue to be described and interpreted in this research.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The research methodology used in this study was designed to gain a more in-depth understanding of the meaning high school principals give to staff motivation and commitment.

This chapter provides an account of the methodology used to conduct the study. The content of the chapter is presented within five sections, beginning with a discussion of the research design chosen for the study and followed by a description of the pilot study conducted to test the research instrument used for data collection. The data collection and analysis process are then presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's trustworthiness.

Research Design

The design of the study was both descriptive and interpretive in nature, with the intent of obtaining a rich and comprehensive understanding of five high school principals' perceptions of their role in motivating and developing staff commitment. Gay (1987) stated that "the descriptive method is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems. Typical descriptive studies are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions and procedures" (p. 189).

In an effort to understand human behavior, a qualitative inquiry approach was chosen. According to Owens (1982), this approach holds the notion that "one cannot understand human behavior without understanding the framework within which the individuals under study interpret their environment and that this, in turn, can best be understood through understanding their thoughts, feelings, values, perceptions, and their actions" (p. 5). Researchers who use this approach are interested in the ways different people make sense out of their lives, that is, their day-to-day, taken-for-granted experiences. In other words, qualitative researchers are concerned with using the "human-as-instrument" (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 250). The purpose for using several interviews within the study was to probe for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of how principals perceived themselves as affecting staff motivation and commitment.

In keeping within the description of qualitative research, this study enabled the researcher to see the real world as those under study see it. As the study regarded the meanings held by the participants as being most important, the research was intended to seek understandings rather than to arrive at conclusions and generalizations about high school principals' role in affecting staff motivation and commitment.

Pilot Study

A semistructured interview guide was pilot tested with two school administrators so that specific questions could be refined and/or changed. Gay (1987) stated:

> Formal evaluation of a research plan involves a pilot study, which is sort of a dress rehearsal. In a pilot study the entire study is conducted, each and every procedure is followed, and the resulting data are analyzed--all according to the research plan.

The collected data were transcribed and analyzed in an attempt to set the stage for the development of a design that would provide for the highly interactive process of gathering and analyzing data. This process produced the initial categories and caused the researcher to reflect on possible themes.

This small-scale pilot study served to assist the researcher in refining procedures related to data collection and analysis techniques. The pilot study enabled the researcher to test her own interviewing skills, to broaden her background knowledge regarding the concept of staff motivation and commitment, and, finally, to modify the interview guide and to refine the focus of the study.

Research Instrument

Semistructured interviews were the dominant strategy for data collection (see Appendix A). The interviews were semistructured so that it was possible to probe for more detailed information when necessary. Open-ended questions enabled the researcher to attain more thorough explanations from the participants and to develop greater insight into how high school principals view their role in motivating and developing staff commitment. As Rist (1977) emphasized, the interpretive researcher "strives for validity through personalized, intimate understandings of phenomena stressing 'close in' observations to achieve factual, reliable and confirmable data . . . through the intensive study of a small group or even a single individual" (p. 46). According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), the interview is best used to "gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insight on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (p. 135).

Data Collection

Permission to conduct the study within four urban school districts was obtained through Field Services at the University of Alberta in February, 1989. The researcher used purposive sampling in selecting principals to participate in the study on the basis of their years of administrative experience in the education field, their reflective ability, their reputation among staff in their school district, and their willingness to express themselves openly on the issues relating to staff motivation and commitment.

In late February, 1989, the principals selected to participate in the study were contacted initially by telephone to inform them of the purpose of the study and to request their involvement. At that time, data files for each principal were begun, so that pertinent information regarding people, events, places, and conversations could be documented for ongoing analysis. Following this, a covering letter and consent form were sent to each individual outlining again the purpose and value of the study and the commitment requested of them for the interviews (see Appendix B). The letter informed each principal that the interviews would be tape recorded and would be anywhere from one-and-one-half to three hours in length. It also stated that the principals had the option to withdraw from the research project at any time throughout the study. The participants were informed that they would have the opportunity to clarify and review their interview transcripts and that permission would be sought to use specific quotations. All principals were assured that the information provided by them in the interviews would be treated with confidentiality and that neither they nor their school district would be identified in the thesis.

All interviews took place in the participants' schools and were scheduled at times that were convenient for each interviewee. The initial interviews were conducted during the month of March, and follow-up contacts were made during April and May. Once the initial interviews were completed with the five participants, the tapes were transcribed, making every effort to provide as accurate a record as possible of the discourse. As Powney and Watts (1987) stated, "Given that a transcription cannot represent everything featured in the original spoken language, it follows that any transcription is an interpretation by the transcriber of what is being said" (p. 147). This, therefore, is just one of many acts of selection that the researcher has to undertake within the research study.

The transcription of the data was carried out in two stages. The first was done by an independent transcriber who produced the whole interview verbatim as far as was possible, including hesitations, pauses, laughs, sighs, coughs, and so on. During the second phase, the researcher replayed the conversation, looking for emphasis, intonation, and comment, what Powney and Watts (1987) referred to as "paralinguistic considerations" (p. 148). The researcher endeavored to preserve the meaning or intent of the speaker by using the participants' words in their own way so as not to detract from feelings which the reader can gain from the spoken word. As few people speak correctly all the time and particular idiosyncrasies in speech are basic to the way other people see and feel about the speaker, the only changes made were removing repetitions and redundancies, improving some of the grammar, and altering some sentence construction.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) and Field and Morse (1985) described well how the data collection and data analysis go ahead step by step and sometimes side by side. As Gay (1987), quoted earlier, said, the interview provides the opportunity to probe and to go deeper and wider in search of relevant data. Probing infers that some analysis has occurred in the researcher's mind, even if it is only "He didn't understand my question," or "What did he really mean by that?" or "That's important; I had better follow that up a little." Field and Morse (1985) stated:

> the qualitative approach to understanding, explaining and developing theory is inductive. This means that hypotheses and theories emerge from the data set while the data collection is in progress, and after data analysis has commenced. The researcher examines the data for descriptions, patterns, and hypothesized relationships between phenomena, then returns to the setting to collect data to test the hypotheses. Thus, the research is a process that builds theory inductively over a period of time, step by step. The theory fits the research setting and is relevant for that point in time only. These data may largely consist of transcriptions of interviews, observations of the setting and of the actors. Data of these kinds are meaningful to others, and considered 'rich' and 'deep.' However, these data are hard to manage for the purposes of analyzing and writing a report, as they can not be readily transformed into numeric codes for statistical manipulation. In this respect they are often said to be 'soft' data. (p. 11)

The transcripts were returned to the five participants along with highlighted notes requiring clarification or further information. At this point follow-up interviews were arranged with each of the five principals. The purpose of the follow-up interview was to allow the researcher and the participant to discuss statements identified within the interview transcripts and to address specific phenomena that appeared to be emerging as a result of the ongoing data analysis. In this way, the principals were provided the opportunity to confirm and clarify the preliminary interpretations made by the researcher and were also encouraged to answer additional questions or to elaborate on specific issues that were highlighted in the transcripts.

The follow-up interview transcripts were subsequently transcribed and analyzed in the same manner as the first interviews. Again, each of the participants received a copy and was contacted for feedback. At this point formal contact with the five principals was completed.

Data Analysis

Powney and Watts (1987) pointed out that "analysis must go beyond a simple description of the data. Analysis is every bit as much an act of constructing interpretations as is the interview session itself, and the analyst will bring to it some interpretations of the data, if only by a process of selection" (p. 143). Guba and Lincoln (1985) referred to the process of data analysis as being a "synthetic one, in which the constructions that have emerged (been shaped by) inquirer-source interactions are reconstructed into meaningful wholes" (p. 333). Thus, the researcher's task is "an act of constructive interpretation," all the while being "consistent and compatible with the general underlying philosophy of research" (Powney & Watts, p. 158).

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) described well the process employed by this researcher:

> Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data. They do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses they hold before entering the study; rather, the abstractions are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together.
>
> Theory developed this way emerges from the bottom up (rather than from the top down), from many disparate pieces of collected evidence that are interconnected. It is called grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As a qualitative researcher planning to develop some kind of theory about what you have been studying, the direction you will travel comes after you have been collecting the data, after you have spent time with your subjects. You are not putting together a

> puzzle, whose picture you already know. You are constructing a picture which takes shape as you collect and examine the parts. (p. 29)

Turner (1981) suggested that "the grounded theory approach is likely to be of maximum use when it is dealing with qualitative data of the kind gathered from participant observation, from the observation of face-to-face interaction, from semi-structured or unstructured interviews . . ." (p. 227). The problem, then, for this researcher was how to handle the qualitative data in order to make some sense of what the study's participants had expressed by means of the interview.

Berg (1989) described the process involved as "content analysis" whereby the researcher develops "inductive categories," which enables linking or grounding the categories to the data from which they derive. He went on to state that the categories that emerge in the course of developing criteria for their selection should "reflect all relevant aspects of the various messages and retain as much as possible the exact wording used in the statements themselves." In this way the properties or criteria are "connected" to the data and are not "merely the arbitrary or superficial application of irrelevant categories" (p. 112).

In addition, Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocate a "constant comparative method" (p. 101) as a means of processing data, which entails the discovery of relationships within the data by analyzing initial observations, by continuously refining the data collection and analysis process, and by an ongoing feedback into the process of category coding.

In adhering to the literature on the methodology in qualitative research, the researcher carried out the analysis of the data gathered in this study in two stages: coding the data and developing the themes.

Coding the Data

This stage of the analysis involved a process of "teasing out" the incidents that were reflected in the interview data (Turner, 1981, p. 228). Guba and Lincoln (1985) indicated that they should "emerge" (p. 340); however, this term does not describe fully the reality of the work involved, as it was time consuming and required a good deal of creativity. This was done by means of marginal notes and highlighting in the text. As this process continued, the researcher attempted to group the incidents within categories. Two kinds of categories appeared to emerge: those that the participants suggested and those that the researcher constructed.

The approach used to sort the data was described by Bogdan and Biklen (1982):

> The Cut-Up-And-Put-In-Folders Approach. One approach to handling the data after this point is to take a scissors and cut up the notes so that the units of data can be placed in manilla folders which have been labeled with one code. (p. 166)

Every effort was made by the researcher to ensure that the label chosen fit the phenomena described in the data. In this manner, categories were carefully formulated under the four overarching research questions with appropriate definitions outlined for each situation. Turner (1981) described the importance of this process:

> It can be seen that the task of producing definitions for the categories which have arisen from the data is a demanding one, but it is crucial to the analysis and often develops a deeper and more precise understanding of the nature of the phenomena being examined. (p. 236)

The categorization process, including producing definitions, was ongoing throughout the two interviews conducted with the participants and was a process of continual refining, labeling, synthesizing, and rearranging to ensure that the properties of each category were precise and that there were no additional categories remaining in the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) used the term "saturation" (p. 111) to describe this process.

Developing the Themes

The final part of the data analysis required the researcher to focus on developing themes. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) described a theme as possessing a "big idea" quality. They suggest that it is a "concept or theory that emerges from your data," as "some signal trend, some master conception, or key distinction (Mills, 1959:216)" (p. 173). Berg (1989) refers to this process as "latent content analysis," which is analysis "extended to an interpretive reading of the symbolism underlying the physically presented data." In seeking out the "deep structural" meaning conveyed by the message, the researcher must be prepared to "offer detailed excerpts from relevant statements (messages) that serve to document the researchers' interpretations" (p. 107).

For this researcher, developing the overarching themes in the study entailed a process of reflecting on what each administrator was really saying about the concept of staff motivation and commitment. The researcher also attempted to relate these intuitions to each of the participants by reflecting on the context of the interviews--the attitudes, intonations, and gestures observed. These underlying "big ideas" appeared to weave through the data and transcend the research questions. Every effort was made on the part of the researcher to "be faithful to the data at hand and monitor self-consciously the inclination to force data into preconceptions" (Parker & Gehrke, 1986, p. 234).

Trustworthiness of the Study

According to Guba and Lincoln (1985), interpretive research must endeavor to meet specific criteria--"credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability"--which ensure the trustworthiness of the study. The researcher must make certain "that any and all appropriate steps have been taken to assure that data from human sources and contexts are meaningful, trackable, verifiable and grounded in the real-life situations from which they were derived" (p. 250).

Guba and Lincoln (1985) insisted that the researcher ask the question, "Do the data sources (most often humans) find the inquirer's analysis, formulations and interpretations to be credible (believable)?" (p. 246). With respect to credibility, then, every effort has been made to ground the data analysis in the interview data to ensure that the realities of the participants have been represented appropriately. The researcher has endeavored to continuously corroborate data, information, and perceptions with the participants throughout the study. As Owens (1982) stated, "The process of member checks is perhaps the single most important means available to the naturalistic inquirer for establishing the credibility of an inquiry" (p. 15). Therefore, as the data analysis and collection phase continued, the researcher safeguarded against the loss of credibility by doing "member checks," a process of continually checking the data with those individuals from whom the data originated to ensure the accuracy of the interpretations throughout the analysis process.

To ensure that this research is credible, dependable, and as transferable as possible, the researcher updated document files for each of the participants, maintained a reflective journal, practiced a rigorous content analysis, used peer consultations, and presented the study's findings in such a descriptive fashion that the reader was able to fully understand the context.

Field and Morse (1985) referred to Homans' (1955) six variables that serve well in considering the adequacy of a qualitative study. These are "time, place, social circumstance, language, intimacy and consensus" (pp. 117-118). With respect to the criterion of time, the researcher must spend sufficient time in the setting to enable adequate contact and rapport with the participants. This researcher conversed with each principal on several occasions either face to face or by telephone and observed them interacting with their staff in the school setting.

The criterion of place refers to the fact that the closer the researcher is to the people she studies, the more accurate will be her interpretation of the situation, all the while ensuring against the loss of objectivity. In this study, the data were gathered at the place of work of the principals, namely, their high schools.

Social circumstance refers to the variety of reported situations in which the behavior is observed. The five participants were requested to provide several examples of situations supporting their perceptions and views relating to their understanding of teacher motivation. In addition, feedback from educators pertaining to the degree of respect commanded by these principals in the field was taken into consideration.

The fourth criterion of language maintains that the more familiar the researcher is with the language of the participants, the greater the accuracy of the interpretations. Again, the researcher must be cognizant of safeguarding objectivity. In meeting this criterion, this researcher relied upon her many years of experience in education as well as her knowledge and familiarity acquired in previous dealings with high school principals. Also, the time spent going over and over the interview data provided the researcher with a confidence in relating to what the participants were discussing.

In a similar fashion, the greater the degree of intimacy that the researcher establishes with the participants, the more accurate will be the data. This researcher was able to develop an appropriate level of intimacy, evidenced by the satisfaction and enjoyment the participants appeared to display in discussing the principalship with an outsider whom they sensed appreciated and understood their work.

The final criterion is that of consensus: The more the researcher confirms the expressed meaning of the participants with others, the greater the accuracy of the interpretations. This researcher employed a peer debriefing approach in discussing her data with other graduate student colleagues as well as seeking advice about growing insights from her program advisor. The participants were frequently requested to verify what had been recorded and what the researcher was inferring from their conversations.

The recommendations of Field and Morse (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1982) pertaining to trustworthy research were seriously considered, and an attempt was made to follow their guidelines.

Summary

The major topics discussed in this chapter related to a description of the study's design, a brief account of the pilot study, and a review of the research instrument and process of data analysis undertaken. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the procedures used to enhance the trustworthiness of the study, thus ensuring its ethical integrity.

Chapter 4

Analysis of the Interview Data

Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the interview data gathered from the five principal participants in the study. The analysis is presented in four parts in order to address each of the four research questions in the study. Various categories are presented within the framework of each research question to highlight the issues surfacing from the interview data.

The intent of this chapter is to provide the reader with both a descriptive and an interpretive analysis of the participants' perception of what constitutes a motivated staff, their understanding of the factors that affect the development of staff motivation and commitment, their description of the motivational actions or strategies they use, and their thoughts on the larger issues that arise from such a discussion.

What Are the Characteristics of a Motivated Staff?

Many similarities in the responses became evident as the administrators described staff members whom they considered to be motivated. The considerations they expressed reflect the teaching staff's degree of self-motivation, their desire for professional effectiveness, their ongoing search for challenge and growth, and their attachment and commitment to the school's goals and vision. The following passages describe the major thoughts and ideas as identified by the five principals according to these four categories.

Self-Motivation

Each administrator was able to provide specific examples of staff members whose physical and mental activities or characteristics demonstrated a positive attitude toward teaching. They all agreed that motivation is dependent upon the individual, that there is "no one basic common denominator" that makes a teacher well motivated because "different things motivate people in different ways." One principal stressed that many factors motivate teachers; "it depends on what is important to the teacher whether or not they are motivated as long as they can focus on something, that was great." The administrators indicated that motivation is an inner state and can be evidenced in a quiet manner as easily as in the exuberant, enthusiastic, energetic type of teacher. Most significantly, they emphasized the importance of feeling good about oneself, which provides a teacher with that "briskness in the step when you leave a job that you think you've done well." As one principal stated:

> If you don't feel good about yourself, you're not very motivated. If you don't feel good about your work, if you don't feel you're accomplishing what you want to do, you end up I think in some cases taking your 20 sick days of leave a year, and you're the first one out of here at the end of the day, and you're the last one in, in the morning.

Teachers who have energy and vitality can think better about what they want to accomplish, can visualize what they would like to see happen, and are thus willing to tackle just about any problem. Often these individuals strive to get those around them motivated to the same level by putting forth new ideas to encourage colleagues to become interested. Also their sense of having fun and knowing they are doing something worthwhile gets other staff members and students going. One administrator described it this way:

> To me happiness for a professional in teaching is someone who is having real fun coming to work in the morning and greeting the kids, kibitzing with kids in the hall, and having interesting little side conversations with youngsters. Youngsters speak fondly of them. They feel good about themselves obviously, and they're the ones that are generating new ideas. They're not the ones that will come and complain to you about either a school-wide difficulty or about another colleague or about a particular student. They will work forever themselves on solving the problem, and then they'll try and offer a solution.

The participants commented on their desire to have as many of these teachers on staff as possible and that often they see a big part of their job as transforming the unmotivated teacher into the self-motivated, self-initiated individual. One principal proposed an interesting analogy when he commented that he would like a staff made up mostly of race horses. In his comparison of teachers to horses, the "race horses" are the people who are "doing all the wonderful things," the work horses are "the plodders that are going from day to day," and the dressage horses are those individuals that "just prance around, just for show, where nothing happens." He commented that you have to have the plodders because "they're the ones that, in fact, keep the place going, they're the ones that do not create waves generally, and they don't create anything negative." However, it is the race horses that instill "magic" into teaching, which occurs when

> teachers do things with individual kids that turn their lives around. They do something so that the rest of the life of that individual is affected by being in contact with that teacher. In this way there is the possibility of teachers accomplishing things that I have never considered possible in this school, in this community.

This same administrator also discussed at some length the teacher as "magician" because often "these individuals have a tendency to work magic with students." He refers to these teachers as "eccentrics," "off-the-wall characters" who sometimes do not "fit the mold." For each administrator, providing these individuals with support and opportunities produces benefits for the school and everyone in it:

> They, in fact, need room. They need for people to sort of get out of their way and help them over the barriers that affect them. . . . It is nurturing and harvesting that vitality that I think really pays off big dividends.

Professional Effectiveness

In outlining the attributes of motivated staff members, the participants stressed that professional effectiveness is a central component. They described at length staff members whose attitudes and behaviors emphasize, first, a positive interaction with students and, second, high standards of teaching performance and expectation.

The principals frequently discussed the importance of the student-teacher relationship in determining if a teacher was motivated or not. They mentioned teachers who care about students, take time to listen to them, genuinely like young people, get involved in extracurricular programs, and show empathy and an understanding for students' feelings as the type of staff members they most liked to see working for them. One administrator stated:

> I don't think I've ever seen as many teachers appreciated by so many students as what there are here. These are people who care about what kids do, who become involved in what kids do, and they have the best interests of the students at heart. . . . They give their time at break, at lunch, before and after school; they're motivated people because they're committed, they're committed to giving kids an education. And that's the way I like to see teachers operate.

These teachers recognize "the rapport between themselves and kids as critical to the teaching process and realize respect has to be earned through positive student relationships instead of demanding it." Another principal emphasized that "if they like working with kids and being with kids, then they're going to be a good teacher."

> Those are the role model kind of people. I can give you tons of names, but those are the gunners, the winners, the ones that kids relate to, the people that create memories for kids. They are all positive about their experience in high school.

The motivated teacher's desire to continuously address the issue of rapport extends both in and out of the classroom. One administrator commented:

> She was the type of teacher that when she gave an essay assignment that assignment would be handed back within a day and a half. She would never use a red pen, she'd use a colored pen, and that page would be just covered with comments, and very few negative. "This is really a good idea but maybe next time you might want to try . . . ." You know, that kind of comment. She would eat her lunch in the cafeteria with 700 kids, moving from table to table. At first kids would say, "Is this person for real?" We ended up with two or three teachers doing that, and they're still doing that because they could see the benefit to them.

Another significant aspect in terms of how the participants defined a motivated staff related to a teacher's concern for high standards of performance and expectation, as one principal stated, "the really good lively professional who is performing right at the peak of their capability." Another principal described one of his excellent teachers:

> Teaching is taking a kid--doesn't have to be a bright kid; it can be any kid--and showing them what the possibilities are . . . : "Here is the project, here is what we would like to see you accomplish, here are the alternatives, here are the different ways in which you can get the information, now put it together in some sense. . . ." That is to me what teaching is all about, that's your excellence in learning. It's a matter of what they're prepared to do, how far they're prepared to take the kids, always just a little bit further than what you're going to get in the book.

One of the other administrators related a specific example of a teacher who had made an outstanding contribution as a coach:

> He achieves wonderful things. He gets maximum performance out of his athletes. He gets incredible support from his parent group. They'll go anywhere for him, they'll go through fire for him. And it's partly the fact that he gets success. He also attracts dozens of coaches and so on. And he seems totally unselfish about the whole process.

One principal referred to these types of teachers as having "some measure of greatness on staff," teachers who do "absolutely everything or almost everything you could ever imagine doing to keep a program going," or, as another participant commented, "The whole staff is involved. . . . Teachers are giving extra time, planning and running around and preparing. . . . It goes on and on and on." For a third participant, a teacher who endeavors to realize her students' potential has high professional standards and expectations:

> She had a strategy, and teachers who reveal in their conversation that they're actively looking at ways of finding out individual students' strength I think are really keen people and are highly motivated teachers. They tend to always try a whole bunch of different teaching strategies. They don't just grind out the same method class after class.

Seeking Challenge

The administrators related that the motivated teachers they knew shared new ideas, liked to express their opinion, and discussed what they had read or heard about with others:

> To me, one indicator is when people bombard you almost daily with "Here's something that I read," or "Here's something I heard about somebody else doing; why don't we do this?" If we are talking ideas, I know we're winning.

The principals were convinced that, in their efforts to try different ways of doing things and because of their continuous desire to get better, these teachers rarely became entrenched in a rut.

> I can recall some of the best coaches that I've seen. No sooner is a season completed than the next weekend there is a complete assessment of what happened over the year: "Here's an outline of how we can do better next year." There is a continuous thirst for how can we do better? how can we grow? and then the ability to translate that to a total school setting. Either as a teacher in the classroom or a coach-sponsoring scenario to say, "Okay, next year we're doing this much better," and then to recommend it to the department. The ultimate, of course, is, "Let's look at the whole scope. We can be much better next year than we were this year if we look at a new way of trying this idea."

One administrator discussed at length teachers who are willing to "reach out and grab things," to teach new courses, to work in new areas and to take a risk, at being interested in challenge and growth.

> If they're continuing to challenge themselves I don't have to worry about staff morale. There is something about change and challenge and growth in the people themselves, and if you get people to systematically plan their own growth, if they come to you and they say, "Now, next year this is what I'd like to do," then I don't have to worry about that person. Not for one minute.

For all of the administrators, ensuring that there were as many of these individuals on staff as possible was viewed as being an important part of their job. This continual working to become better, to try new things in order to improve what was being done, was best portrayed in the words of this principal:

> To me highly motivated people have got this restless urge to always get better and to be better, and if they don't have an idea how they can be better in their classroom or how the whole school can be better doing something, then they tend to have a narrow focus, and they are doing basically what they did a year ago.

Attachment and Commitment

Each of the participants stressed the significance of a school vision and the necessity for the teacher to be attached or committed to the school's goals. One administrator referred to a particularly motivated staff member with these comments:

> She asks a lot of questions about what it is we're trying to do, she internalizes the information, and then after that she sort of lives it. . . . And she's very good about monitoring things if she believes she's being asked to do something that's not within the vision. She'll come and check it out.

For one administrator, the school's vision of "sharing, caring, and serving" necessitated his teachers' demonstrating these qualities to students. He emphasized that his staff epitomized this philosophy so much that he often became concerned. "The staff here is so much that way [caring] that sometimes I worry about it. You know, perhaps they're going a little overboard. . . . if you really care, this can happen."

Another principal stressed that in his school teachers must understand that schools are for the benefit of students, and for him successful teachers are those that get the best results: "The bottom line is, what kind of results are those people getting? And that's all I'm concerned with really, that the process of education is carried through. I'm not about to tell the teacher how to do it."

For a third principal, a highly motivated staff is one that adheres to his philosophy and in this way becomes "his staff" and therefore ensures the proper operation of the school.

> One thing I found very difficult when I left there to come here was the fact that the staff was not my staff. It's becoming my staff now. It takes a while. I think that's important because then you have a staff that will motivate themselves because they want to please the administration.

All of the administrators discussed the emphasis they place on their staff being committed to the growth and development of young people. According to one principal, the teacher who says, "I like to work with young people to learn mathematics," not "I teach mathematics," is the one he wants to work for him.

> I assume that whenever I talk with a person they're qualified to teach as far as their curricular areas are concerned. They have a degree, and if you can see that they've had fairly decent student teaching, then that's a given. However, when I talk to the individual, he/she had better come up with some answers dealing with what this business is all about, and that's the fact that they're here to teach young people, to give them the opportunity to learn what they're capable of learning. If they don't mention that, then they're not going to work here.

Other administrators mentioned that the motivated teacher is the one who clearly plans for creative ways to help children mature and grow. For them the dedicated, committed teachers never stop thinking about how to be a better teacher.

> The teacher has an overall mission in life that they never deviate from, and they translate every situation into a basic question for themselves: "How can I help these kids to grow?" So whether they're coaching, teaching, or dealing with kids outside their door in the hallway, "How can I help these kids to mature and to grow?" If that's the focus, if that's the mission of the person, then these people just never present motivational problems.

Several of the principals referred to motivated teachers as those who work well with one another,

> be they rookies or veterans; enthusiastic, keen, or less so; the ones that even on their free time never quit thinking about how to be a better teacher and how to share what they have read with others because it is for the benefit of the whole school.

One principal summarized the motivated teachers' attachment and commitment to the school as having put heart and soul into the school, as filling the environment with electric shocks, as having a sense of ownership and, as a result, really being responsible for whatever positive reputation the school enjoys in the community. In his words, "they are the ones that really carry the culture for education. They're the ones that really make a difference. They are the ones that kids remember all of their lives. They're the ones that turn people's lives around."

Conclusion

In conclusion, the five principals were able to clearly describe what for them were the characteristics of a motivated and committed staff. They stressed that whether or not an individual was motivated depended largely on the individual and the individual's own state of mind. Motivated teachers are those who continually work with students, all the while emphasizing high standards of performance and expectation for themselves and their students. Those teachers who were identified as being committed to teaching and dedicated to the school and its goals were also the teachers who regularly looked for ways to improve their teaching by trying new strategies and by taking risks, and who ultimately never became "entrenched in a rut." As the participants discussed the characteristics of their motivated teachers, they began to relate the many factors that have the potential to encourage teacher motivation or may also serve as a barrier, limiting staff morale. The following research question examines more closely what factors these administrators perceived as developing a motivated and committed staff.

What Are the Factors that Affect Teacher Motivation?

When the five administrators were asked to express their views on the factors that they perceive affect staff morale in their school, they identified numerous concerns that seemed to cluster together into the four broad categories of individual orientations, working conditions, internal environment, and organizational climate.

Individual Orientations

All of the administrators emphasized factors that pertain to the teacher as an individual. The participants indicated that teachers were often affected by the pressures of home life, family commitments, community involvement, the aging process, and the workday routine in such a way as to affect teacher motivation. As one principal stated:

> It takes an incredibly powerful person to be experiencing difficulties and to be able to come to work and to totally shut that aspect of their lives right out and focus on work, maintaining a real positive kind of picture on the work front. Just about always there is a glimmer at least that the home life affects the work life.

Another principal supported this notion when he commented:

> Kids are so involved these days, and if a teacher's got two kids they're always involved with those kids. You find that it tends to be teachers that end up being on the organization committees for hockey, figure skating, or whatever. I think it's because they've got good organizational skills. So that's an added pressure. They're going all day here and then bango! at home, they're going all night. And I think that adds a lot of pressure on teachers.

Several of the principals emphasized that certain hazards associated with teaching, such as taking on unrealistic workloads, getting burned out, staying in one location too long, and being unwilling to try new teaching strategies or programs, all have the potential to affect teacher motivation. One principal maintained that this leads to teachers losing confidence in themselves and even an inability to do the job.

> I think one of the difficulties that teachers can get into is that if you're in the same place doing the same job for many, many years, your confidence begins to wane, you start wondering whether you can, in fact, do anything but what you're doing. It is a tremendous confidence booster to tackle a new program or something and succeed, to put yourself under pressure and take risks.

The principals advocated that teachers must feel good about what they have accomplished and work together as a staff to do something for the students, and one principal endorsed the idea of transferring to another situation if this does not occur:

> The only thing you can do is say, "Okay, I can't get the satisfaction I need out of this school, and I don't think I'm doing the job that I should be doing in this school, and therefore I would like to transfer to another situation."

All of the principals discussed the notion of the maturing teacher as presenting special problems for the school in terms of motivation. Factors such as the teacher's physical health, approaching retirement, and a concern for stability and security all present ramifications for the principal.

> As you get more and more people in their mid-fifties, I would say personnel management will become more complicated and difficult. Many of the problems associated with the life cycle tend to increase and compound at that time. Physical ailments, for example, tend to increase. We have right now several staff members out for extended periods of time. A number of those are related in some way or other to the aging process.

One principal reinforced this notion and expressed that the consequences of the aging teacher are particularly evident when confronted with the staffing issue:

> I see it all the time, particularly when it comes to staffing. We're looking for a phys. ed. teacher right now, and one of the prerequisites that I have established is they have to coach. I'm in the horns of a dilemma. I have a girl with whom I've worked. She can make the move now, and I would take her in a minute, but I think she has gotten to a point where that's past her, that's behind her, and I appreciate that. It takes its toll in that particular area. Phys. ed. is a tough one, with the aging thing. Now, with regard to your academic areas, the older a person gets and the more set they get in their ways, and the more things they do the same as they've done them before, it becomes very difficult to break that. I can't say that it interferes with their teaching. But they don't have the same enthusiasm that a young person has, because their lifestyle has changed completely. The classic example is the young lady that gets married, just super, go-get-'em types when they were single, and then when they got married without kids they were great. Now they have two kids, plus the fact that

> they're getting older: That changes their whole perspective on what they're doing. And yet they tell you that that's not going to interfere with anything. You know it does.

Working Conditions

All of the principals in their comments referred to salaries, benefits, teacher assignments, staff cutbacks, recognition by the school board, and certain hygiene factors as having an impact on teacher motivation. Most of the principals referred to money as being an issue for teachers; however, they differed on its degree of importance. Some principals mentioned equity in pay; others, the decreasing dollars available for education; and two principals indicated that they felt teachers are paid fairly well in this part of the world.

Several principals referred to hygiene factors in teaching, for example, the ventilation system; the size of the staff room; the condition of the parking lot; the lack of furniture, resources, books, and supplies; the teaching assignment, class size; teacher evaluation; and preparation time. For the most part the principals appeared to be saying that all of these factors affect staff motivation but they are not viewed by the teacher as being most central to feeling satisfied with teaching.

> The minor issues are the sort of hygiene issues. Is the venting working, for example? Well, that's certainly important on a Friday afternoon when it's hot and stuffy. But in the final analysis it makes little difference, because I have seen wonderful things happen under a fig tree in Africa and I've seen some awful things happen in a multi-million-dollar lab in Alberta. If morale can be measured in terms of what people feel is wrong, then if people are complaining because the parking lot isn't paved properly, if that's their biggest concern, and not that the community, the administration, or the world is supporting what they're trying to accomplish in the classroom, then perhaps the concern for the hygiene issues is an indication that things on the larger scale are okay.

External Environment

When the participants were asked to elaborate on factors that they perceive affect teacher motivation, some of their comments referred to influences external to the school situation. In examining closely their perceptions, the following pressures were mentioned: parents, the community, the provincial government, society, and the school's profile.

Parents

Several principals indicated they felt that the parents in their community constituted a major factor in teachers' and in principals' motivation. In some instances it was considered to be a positive influence, as one principal emphasized:

> We have a very strong parent association. . . . I think it's been good for me because it's made me stop and take stock of things every once in awhile. . . .I have to be a little more open with people, and I have to show them that I'm concerned about the things that either they're going to do or the things that are going to happen to them or with them or whatever the case may be. . . . And in the long run it pays off because everybody that we deal with knows what's happening in the school. There's no hidden agenda in this school, which I think is particularly good for our teachers, because they are wide open about everything that's happening. . . . Once our teachers understand that they're going to get cooperation from the parent, from the home, this lets them do their job that much better. That's motivation.

For this principal, this positive parental influence encouraged his teachers to work towards making education better. Another principal concurred that his parents, although they did not constitute a formal parent structure, did provide support to many groups in the school which ultimately benefited both teachers and students.

However, another administrator related some concerns about the parental pressures in his school. This principal contrasted inner-city schools with those in suburbia, indicating that in the former, there is an appreciation for anything that teachers do, whereas in the latter, there is a higher expectation, and often teachers are criticized more.

> That's an outside factor that I think has a direct impact on a teacher. Often you feel unappreciated, unloved, and unwanted, and even though teachers try so hard, they don't get the kind of verbal rewards that they would like from their customers, and that's the real kicker. I've actually seen and run into people, administrators too, that have said they'd like to move from an affluent suburban kind of school setting into an inner-city setting because they feel they would get more intrinsic rewards, and morale is so much better.

A second principal supported this perception when asked about parental influence:

> They affect it totally. This community, for instance, has extremely high expectations. And they don't hesitate at all. If they feel that their kid is being shafted, or whatever, they're on the phone, and I make sure the teacher's aware of that, because I feel that the teacher should know. If they want to become a better teacher, they better know what the complaints are. Some of them find that very difficult to accept, but I still think that they have to know before something happens in terms of a big blowup. My phone rings steady from parents or kids with concerns.

Community

Other aspects of a school's community were highlighted by the participants as playing a role in staff motivation and commitment. One principal mentioned the type of student: "We have a better clientele . . . , a very solid kind of middle class that's supportive of education. We have a slightly greater percentage of the brighter kids, . . . very few of the more frustrating elements of kids to deal with."

Several participants mentioned the need to involve the community in the school. They viewed this participation as having positive implications for staff. One principal stated:

> This school is a fairly major community centre in many ways. . . . Most of the community wander in and out of the building at some time or another attending night classes, using the vocational area, coming in for meetings, or associating with other groups that book the building. Most of the studies that have been done on the opinions people have about schools indicate that the closer the people are to the school, the more positive their opinion tends to be.

A second administrator put it this way:

> This school, like all schools, is open to the public at any time. This one is open just a little bit longer and a little more often than most schools. It makes it easier for us if people complain to me about walls that are cracked and have holes and this kind of thing. That's good. They can complain to me, and I can relay this to the people who are responsible. Very seldom do you run into a negative proposition with the community. That kind of support and reaction from the community gives me the motivation to do the things that I want to see happen in a school.

Two of the participants commented on the effect of the business community, particularly in reference to high school graduations, the work experience and vocational programs, and charitable organizations. In the words of one principal:

> When I say community, I'm talking about businesses in here as a result of our work experience program, our voc. program, for example, automotives. The number of contacts that a high school has, especially a vocational high school, is staggering.

A second principal concurred with these comments:

> It's pressure that big business puts on when they want to sell their coats and their dresses and their flowers. You get it in other ways too. All these charitable organizations who want you to do fund raising for them make you feel guilty because you say no. It detracts from motivation quite a bit.

This same principal referred to the "McDonald's Syndrome" as a factor teachers must contend with. He indicated that the work force hires students to work in fast food chains at minimum wage and then lets them go before they have to begin paying them benefits. The student then moves on to the next fast food outlet. This principal described his teachers' concern for their students' naive expectations as affecting morale.

Government

Two of the principals discussed at length the impact of the numerous curriculum changes instituted by the provincial government. The changes were described as "too much too quickly" because "teachers are frustrated." The move by Alberta Education to revamp its focus in terms of inservicing teachers was identified as also having an effect on teachers. He commented:

> They no longer call teachers together in meetings; they do it by audiotapes and videotapes. I don't think teachers like that. They would actually like to sit down where they can talk to somebody who knows what they are doing and ask questions. They don't have that opportunity, and I think that puts a lot of pressure on teachers as well. Teachers want to do the best job possible, and I don't think that we're getting the information to them in the best possible manner.

The second principal agreed that many of the changes proposed by the provincial government would, in fact, alter the job description of a lot of teachers: "They're not going to have anything to do anymore, and they're going to have to change or get out or something because, even for this year, we're noticing some dramatic changes in the registration patterns for students."

Society

Two of the participants believed that teachers today are required to deal with changed, increased, and added societal expectations and responsibilities. Often society's problems add an extra burden to the duties already handled by the teacher. Specifically identified were sexual and physical abuse, drug abuse, pregnancy, and students in trouble with the law.

> I think this hurts morale in the sense that the things that you're frustrated about, you're seemingly powerless to change. They are frustrating, and they wear you down. The teacher is frustrated because he or she as an individual can't seem to do anything. You're a victim. while you recognize the problem and you see some simple cures, it simply doesn't go away. That's frustrating. I think having society's problems sort of at your door all the time is a bit of a morale downer.

The principals mentioned that because teachers view themselves as positively affecting the lives of their students, they carry, rightly or wrongly, some guilt when their students do not respond:

> It hurts us when our kids, either individually or as a group, disappoint us or do things that are either dumb or they get into trouble; it hurts. . . . Every little sort of tragedy that happens, I think it takes the wind out of our sails to some degree. It's hard not to somehow get personally involved with it. I think any good teacher gets sort of involved, and those are sort of morale downers.

School's Profile

Most of the principals relayed their perceptions of how the school's profile contributes to the motivation of their staff. A high profile in the community, a positive perception on the part of the parents, motivates teachers because they are proud of the job they are doing and want to continue perpetuating that image: "The teachers are proud of that reputation, and they don't want to lose it, so they're going to work harder. They'll be more motivated to do better in order to make sure that they maintain that reputation." Another principal commented: "That contributes in a sense, making some of the job easier, because we have a kind of community persona, if you want to call it that, an image." The staff's morale is improved because this is where they want to work, there are no transfer requests, and there is little major complaining. Another principal concurred:

> If you've got the reputation of being right on top of things and you're in a kind of growth mode in that you're always trying new, different, better things and really working hard at getting better, then people recognize that and respond to you. I think the self-esteem of the staff rises, and as their self-esteem goes up, so does their performance.

More specifically, one principal attributed the school's profile to encouraging diversity and individuality and thus ultimately serving to motivate:

> I would say it's maybe the tradition of the building, it's always had a fairly high profile. It's always been sort of a free-wheeling school of sorts. There is room for diversity, student or teacher diversity. You can do your own thing. You don't have to fit into some sort of a mold or pattern. You don't have to sort of give up some of your individuality if you are here. We have some genuine eccentrics on staff, and to me that's great.

A third principal presented another picture, one where staff motivation is affected if the school has a poor image in the community:

> A school that's at a low ebb in terms of their own image in the community affects the people that work there. It affects their self-esteem. If their self-esteem is low, they tend not to be motivated and work so well. When you continuously hear your workplace downgraded, I think it eventually does something to you. If you're continually criticized, directly or indirectly, about your workplace, you will gradually start to perform like a second-class employee, and you'll lose the desire to fight your way out of it.

One administrator emphasized that often the public's perception of a school is very tenuous, this is to say, oftentimes balancing precariously, ready to shift in either a positive or negative direction. In one case an examination of the teaching of individuals on staff or a department's priorities encouraged the public's perception to change.

> All of a sudden parents start seeing the same results in a better light, and they think things are better, and they may, in fact, not be that much better when you consider one or two

> percent on an average. Is this significant, or isn't it? Given the context, it probably isn't. But at least the perceptions change and the customers feel better. And of course the whole morale thing gets to improve. Kids and teachers feel better about themselves and morale is better.

A second principal stressed the frustration in all of this:

> Here's something out there that I cannot control. I can't control the rumors, I can't control people's opinions, what we did do, and what we didn't do. I can't go around telling people what the real story was. It's very frustrating. And we've very vulnerable to that kind of thing.

Organizational Climate

The participants referred to many aspects of the school's organization as being a consideration among the factors affecting teacher motivation. Their comments appeared to group together under the two subcategories of people and structure.

The People Element

There were three separate groups of people--students, colleagues, and administrators--identified by the principals as constituting people pressures for teachers.

Students. Several principals addressed the usual problems associated with teaching students--absenteeism, lates, lack of commitment, and incomplete assignments--as being of concern to teachers, but that the real dilemma for teachers seemed to be whether or not their students succeeded.

> In high school, attendance, lates, and these kinds of things are always there and pester the life out of you. . . . They don't really bother the real professional. What really bugs a professional teacher is when they teach their hearts out, and to evaluate the process they find that they aren't successful, that they didn't get the quiz results or the diploma exam results they thought they were going to get. They say,

> "Listen, you can talk about morale or whatever incessantly. The only thing that really bugs us is when our kids don't perform as well as we think they should. Everything else is kind of peripheral."

Often, the type of student, the grade level, or the students' values were seen as being factors in whether or not teachers felt motivated to do the job. The principals indicated that it was tiring for teachers, requiring extra time, work, and energy, to teach these students. However, the administrators stressed that it was their duty to reinforce to their teachers that they must recognize that this was part of their job.

> It was a concern that we had a large number of special ed. students in the school and the quality of the so-called regular student was not all that great. Well, we can't go to the parents and say, "Feed your kids some pills and make them smarter." It was the nature of the school. We had a certain clientele of kids at that particular time. We had kids who weren't as smart or as capable as the ones we were used to working with ten years ago.

Each of the principals stressed that, for teachers, the students were the ones who really determined how teachers felt about their jobs. As one principal stated:

> This constant repartee between teachers and students can be very healthy or it can be extremely unhealthy. You'll find that a good teacher can joke with the class and nothing is lost in the translation; it can still be a learning situation. A teacher who can't do that and is constantly getting bad remarks from kids, badgered by kids, experiencing total disruption in what he is trying to do, maybe not all of the time, but the majority of the time, has to be disturbed. It disturbs me.

The participants talked about the importance of student contact. They mentioned the chemistry between teachers and students, and how their teachers take pride in seeing the "fruit of their toils," and in being a part of the smiles on the faces of their students when they are successful. One principal related how teachers feel on graduation night:

> We are kind of like mothers and fathers because--and this might sound corny--our kids provide for us a little bit of immortality. As is the case with parents, in each of those grade twelve students there is a little bit of us. Thursday night I know the staff is going to be extremely proud of these young people for what they have accomplished.

He continued:

> You get your rewards from seeing the product, and that sounds terrible to think of children or young people as a product, but basically that's our masterpiece. What we are able to do with the students in this school from September to June is our accomplishment. It's our work of art, our masterpiece, and if we see that we have done something that has great value, that's our reward. It is particularly important when you've got a student who is just hanging by the threads, somebody who has been skipping classes, somebody who has been experiencing difficult personal problems, and you're able to do something for that student to allow him or her to continue on and to actually, or at least partially, achieve his or her goal.

Colleagues. As the participants elaborated on the people aspect of their organization, they made reference to the impact that colleagues have on teacher motivation. The principals very carefully related certain situations concerning teacher relations that they had to be aware of and were required to effectively address. One principal indicated that he felt the morale on his staff was much improved over the previous year due to the transfer of several staff members out of his school. Some of his teachers had remarked to him how much more positive the school's atmosphere seemed without the "cliques, the gossips, and the negative stuff." This same principal maintained a watchful eye for troubled-looking staff members, emphasizing that he encouraged his teachers "to get things off their chest" when conflicts arose between staff members. Another principal commented on his amazement at how few teacher confrontations he had witnessed over the years. He indicated that he encouraged his staff to resolve differences on their own.

Each administrator made reference to the complacent teacher and the maturing teacher as playing a central role in affecting staff motivation and commitment. The complacent teacher, the teacher who portrays the attitude of "I've paid my dues," requires special attention on the part of the principal. As one principal stated:

> If you have a person, whether it be an administrative person, a classroom teacher, a custodian, or a secretary, who has the attitude, "I've paid my dues," forget it! If that person isn't doing their work, the people who work with him or under him are not going to work either unless there is a tremendous amount of self-motivation such that they don't care what the person above them in the hierarchical structure is doing. In the classroom, if the teacher's not doing their work, most of the time the kids aren't going to do it either unless they are at a particular level where they will learn in spite of the teacher.

Another principal indicated that he viewed the problem of the complacent teacher as an ever-increasing concern for principals. He seemed to link their inability to cope in the classroom with the aging process.

> I have not seen teachers that were wonderful teachers become incapable, but I've seen teachers who could cope, more or less, run into real problems after age 50. What provided their credibility? Perhaps it was energy or a little bit of youth. When that's gone, they are much more difficult to deal with. A fifty-three-year-old teacher incapable of managing at the classroom level is very hard to work with.

This principal discussed openly the psychological-emotional problems and physical ailments which appeared to be reflected by an increase in people on long-term disability.

> With our board the vast majority of long-term disability people are, in fact, in their late forties and early fifties, and many of them will never go back to work. So that brings on complications of various kinds, and it makes personnel management certainly different, if not difficult.

In his comments about the rapidly aging teaching force, this principal referred to the unlikelihood of any key positions being available for new teachers in his school district for some time to come, which in his view would have the potential to present special problems for administrators.

> Essentially the baby boomers occupy most of the key positions everywhere. They are not, in fact, anxious to give up those positions. So your typical 40-year-old in this school is not likely to leave. They are likely to, in fact, finish their careers here. Some of them are wonderful people; most of them, in fact, are tremendous, but they will all grow old together, and this bulk of people that are now 41, 42, or 43 years old will presumably teach for another 15 years, somewhere in that region, and they will just get old together. Roughly half of our staff is in that category. I would say there will be some complicated and difficult personnel management as you get so many people in their mid-fifties. As these people get older, you're going to get a kind of bimodal curb down the road. There will be nobody in between and a vast number of young people at the bottom. So you're going to get this old/young split.

A second principal supported this viewpoint when he described how teaching in isolation may result in maturing teachers losing confidence in their ability and becoming fearful of sharing their ideas: "It's always something you have to watch out for very carefully: older teachers who are a little bit weak or who haven't kept abreast of changes." A third principal echoed much the same perception:

> The fact that you're a year older means you're going to do things with a little more insurance on your side. You're not going to take the same risks. The aging factor has an effect in education, and that's a classic, too. Our system is one that is relatively old because we haven't been able to hire anybody for the past six or seven or eight years. We haven't brought in any young people at the bottom. Our older people keep getting older.

One particular administrator expressed concerns regarding the maturing teaching staff when he referred to the notion of "clones." He stressed that this has the potential to affect teacher motivation when he commented:

> Clones are people whose demographics are essentially the same as the people already here. It is the same sort of phenomenon that you get in a suburban area where all the people up and

> down the block are the same age. They tend to be at the same stage in their lives, they all tend to go to work at the same time, and so on. I think if we bring on a forty-year-old physics teacher from another high school or from a junior high, we are adding to the same kind of demographic pattern that we already have. It's hard for us to break the pattern because we have not recently had access to the open field as far as hiring is concerned. The little hiring that we have been able to do is from the system, and from the system we get people who are much like the people we already have.

As he described it, if "everyone on staff is 45 or older, they are at a different point of life than someone who is 25, and they're certainly not into the same kind of activities."

This same principal highlighted an interesting aspect of the relationship of older teachers with students. He appeared to feel that the 40-year-old teacher was probably at the most difficult age in terms of relating to teenagers and that, in fact, teachers beginning or finishing their career would have a better relationship with their students.

> What you get between a forty-year-old and a seventeen-year-old is competition. The seventeen-year-old sees the forty-year-old as a sort of surrogate parent, and the forty-year-old tends to behave like a parent, so you get that normal clashing of values. Kids often get along better with their grandparents than they do with their parents. The grandparents and the kids are not a threat to each other. They're not in competition with one another.

All of the administrators emphasized the importance of having a blend of personality strengths, of inexperienced and experienced staff, and a mix of young and old teachers. One principal used a team metaphor to emphasize the importance of having a staff made up of "rookies," younger teachers who "don't have the family commitments, are eager to get ahead, and will work their buns off, so to speak, and their ideas and their enthusiasm are catchy," as well as veterans, the people who have been at it for awhile because they bring experience, caution, and advice.

> On the one hand, you've got the eagerness, the vitality in many cases, and sometimes the getting burned because of a lack of experience. On the other hand, you've got people saying, "Yes, I admire what you're doing," and "Yes, it's a good idea; however, maybe you should take into consideration that this might be a possible result of whatever it is you're going to do."

As he stated, "most coaches would say your best results come when you get a good mesh of people to do the job." Another principal concurred because, as he commented, if your school does not have the blend, then "you're struggling to get people to do the kinds of things that have to occur in a school, over and above what normally takes place in a classroom."

One of the other participants discussed at length his insistence that departments in his high school be made up of different personalities:

> Sure, it's the way you do things, it's the way you operate, it's the energy level, it's many, many different factors all put together, and so, to my way of thinking, the advantage is having a balance of a variety of personalities within any one area.

He seemed to feel that a variety of individuals, including a good balance of male and female teachers, brought various perspectives to the department and added much to the overall strength of the school.

> I just think that, collegially speaking, when you have your department meetings and so on, the different perspectives that you get from a variety of personalities are really of value to everybody in the working group, certainly for the youngsters.

He went on to relate that in terms of recruiting staff, he determines ahead of time the kind of person he is seeking and attempts to make the selection with these factors in mind:

> You will always want to get the best teacher in a subject area. An almost equal consideration is, if there are two equally qualified people but with different personalities, and we have defined personality A as being really optimum, and if there is

> a personality A, then that person will obviously get the job over personality B. It's a question of matching individuals to different locations.

Administrators. When the participants referred to the people of their organization as playing a significant part in their teachers' motivation, they were including the role that they, themselves, play and, in fact, the part all administrators play. All of the five principals indicated that they have expectations for their teachers which they realize may cause stress or pressure for some staff members. One principal described it this way:

> My expectations are unrealistic because I as an individual can do things that others simply can't do. That is because (a) my kids are grown up, and (b) my wife is working and is involved with some things of her own. As an example, there are six senior high evening dances here during the year, and I will have been at five. That might be an unrealistic expectation for somebody else. It is an unrealistic expectation. I expect people to be here, but it would be unfair to say to them, "Look, I do it, so therefore you should do it to the same degree." Another one. I quite often don't get out of here until six, six-thirty, seven at night. If I had that same expectation, although I'd like to see people here working with kids until that hour, for everybody else it would be unrealistic. . . . Both parents are working, they have to pick up the kid from day care, or they've got hockey to take the kids to at night, or they're coaching soccer. How do you deal with this? It's a dilemma because my expectations are beyond what the individual can realistically do.

A second principal elaborated further on this notion when he affirmed the importance of administrators' expectations but added that he perceived it was his responsibility to model these standards for department heads, teachers, and students, and in some instances, he agreed, there would be an added pressure on a teacher:

> If you have an expectation that teachers will be highly motivated and will continually upgrade their skills, knowledge, and attitudes in their subject areas, then I think it's important that the principal set an example at the school level. I should have informal conversations with individuals in and around the school, and I should devote entire staff

> meetings to examining what is new in our business and what direction do we want to move in. "What do you think of this idea?" is, I think, a very common opening remark I should use in a conversation.

Another administrator admitted to placing added pressures on his teachers because he believed in the importance of ensuring that all staff understand fully the school's philosophy. For him, every staff member had a responsibility to be knowledgeable about the direction the school was going and his or her role in the larger picture. In order to accomplish this goal, the administrators of the school are obliged to work as a team and be receptive to teachers' ideas and contributions. If this does not take place, then the administrators are seen as a threat to teacher motivation.

> I think the real important job of the administration team is to make sure that the ideas that are generated fit with the school philosophy so that they're all channelled in the right direction. The other thing is, in a school this size, you've got to make sure everybody has all the facts about exactly what's going on. If you don't, you're not going to get other people to buy into anything, and again it's going to erode their motivation. You have to be, as principal ~~or~~ administrative team, very receptive to everybody's ideas; no matter how stupid they might sound, no matter how great they might be, you've got to respond in the same plane. I have one of my assistant principals who has great difficulty with that. If somebody comes in with an idea that maybe is the stupidest thing in the world, he'll tell them that: "That's stupid, get out of here, I don't have time for it." Well, that just destroys a teacher coming up with another idea.

For this principal, a highly motivated staff was one that emulated his philosophy; therefore, he emphasized that he was fully aware of his role in ensuring that his staff achieved that end.

The administrators indicated that teacher motivation increased when they demonstrated that they cared about their staff. One principal described a situation where administrative care and support were missing:

> Sometimes in a school where the support from the administration is lacking severely, you see teachers take the situation into their hands in order to get a job accomplished. Once that occurs, then you have almost anarchy, because every teacher now starts setting their own rules. So in a sense then, it becomes an individual place where everyone in order to survive must protect themselves against whatever is going to happen.

All of the participants felt it was critical to staff morale to thank their staff, to show their appreciation for their efforts, and to support their ideas. As one principal stated, "They know that you care, and it's not a nine-to-five kind of job." Another principal put it this way:

> If I were to pick one single motive, one factor which I think motivates people to do a good job, it's the fact that they understand and know that they have my support in what they do and that I'm prepared to back them up on various things. Again, they must be right. And that's the bottom line: They know that they'll get all the support that they need from me if they're doing the right thing. If they're not doing the right thing, they'll get no support from me, and it's just that simple.

And one other principal commented:

> I called the two assistant principals in and said, "We're going to put on an administrative luncheon for the entire staff." I didn't even let them argue the idea. "We're going to take it out of the milk fund, whatever." Well, bang! That's all it took. Sixty-five people sitting in a small staff room having lunch paid for by the administration. It brought everybody together here. You've got to do that kind of thing every so often.

One or two of the participants mentioned that central office personnel had the potential of affecting teaching motivation. The reference was made in this way:

> I think last year the staff morale was extremely low. Most of the teachers have taught here for a lot of years, and there were a lot of problems here last year with who was going to have to move to a new school, because they did not want to go. The powers that be kept procrastinating in making the decision, and the longer the personnel office took, the worse the morale got within the building.

However, another principal indicated that staff motivation had been positively affected by the visibility of school board members and their superintendent. He stated:

> I don't think school boards and superintendents give enough recognition to good teachers. Sometimes when it is given I personally feel that it's not a genuine thing. I feel that board members should be in the schools more often, not to criticize, not to evaluate or anything like that, just to come in and visit. We have a new superintendent, and I've seen the gentleman five times in this building already. It's amazing. We never see anybody from over there. We hired a supervisor of secondary education. I said to him, "One thing that you've got to do is make a commitment to getting into the high schools." He's in here practically once a day, and the teachers love that. I think that helps to motivate them.

One principal summed up best how the superintendent can impact teacher motivation when selecting school principals:

> I believe that the superintendent likes to put people in different situations to try and have those schools become more like that individual. That's generally what seems to happen: Schools kind of take on the characteristics of the principal.

The people element in a school's organization was identified by the principal participants as being a significant factor in motivating staff. Relating to students, dealing with their problems, and ultimately being affected by their successes or lack thereof were viewed as being integral to teacher motivation. Teachers' relationships with other teachers, the complacent teacher, the aging teacher, and the importance of a proper mix of teacher ability and personality were also identified within the people element. Finally, the function of the administration in teacher motivation--expectations, philosophy, concern--was described by the participants.

Characteristics of the Workplace

As the participants discussed the organizational climate of their schools, they referred to certain characteristics of their workplace that they viewed as factors which affected the development of a motivated and committed staff. These characteristics included the school's culture, the development of teacher growth, collegiality and recognition, and the emphasis on trust, communication, and equity in teachers' workload and participation.

School culture. The administrators indicated that the environment of the school contributed to staff morale. For one principal, building an environment "filled with electric shocks" ensured the ongoing existence of an exciting staff and self-motivated students. According to this administrator, "this is what keeps teachers going from year to year. They've forgotten the lulls and the bad days." This same principal related that it required some time before the school's culture really became established under him but that the staff worked on it to please him: "It takes a while. And I think that's important, because you have a staff who will motivate them themselves 'cause they want to please the administration."

Another principal indicated that he had established an environment appreciative of change, and this he perceived as ultimately affecting his staff. He recognized that teachers are somewhat fearful of any rapidly imposed change, so he ensured that what he had in mind for the school made sense, was reasonable, and was going to be beneficial to the overall situation. In the end, he was surprised to see that the changes were easily accepted by the staff and that they seemed ready for the change.

> You're running into cliques that have been in operation for many years. Teachers are a funny group; they don't like to be upset quickly or even sometimes over a period of time. They like to keep doing things that are fairly successful. Their idea is, why fix it if it isn't broken? That has a certain amount of truth. If you're going to make a change that has any impact whatsoever, you're going to have to break down these

> traditions and habits that people have developed through the years. However, you better be sure that what you're going to do makes sense. You must not change for the sake of change.

So for this administrator creating just the right climate which, for him, involved preparing his staff was viewed as critical in terms of getting the staff working with him.

A second principal commented that the traditions of a school helped to create the type of environment in which staff feel comfortable. He maintained that a "collective mentality" must be created around either the traditions of the building or the administrator's leadership style. In this way, staff are motivated to work together.

> I suppose if I really choose to I could probably have half of the staff members of this school turn over in a three-year period, if I made that a goal. I could just keep the heat on them and on central office for them to go somewhere else, to do something else. Then I would stock the school with what I considered my kind of people.

However, this principal stressed that he chose to cultivate an environment where his vision or goals blended in with the traditions that already existed in the school. He used a hockey analogy to make his point:

> What I've chosen to do is take what I've got and work with it. You'll find coaches like this in sports. When they take over a team they'll either try to take the existing team and work with it--this would be, I guess, like Calgary. Terry Crisp has done that with the Flames. He basically took the same team and fine-tuned it--or you get the Phil Esposito approach in New York. He took the team, dismantled it, and brought in a whole bunch of new people. Calgary is winning, and the Rangers aren't.

A third principal emphasized that an administrative team approach was essential if staff were to feel that the organization they were working in was fair and portrayed a common philosophy:

> We all have the same philosophy, and I think that's good, I believe that motivates. I don't think people should say,

> "Well, you're working with one and he's doing it and she's not doing it so you're lucky," or "You're not lucky because you're with the other one." We do have our areas of responsibility. I think we are all prepared to put in the hours. We are all available. It's a team approach. We have basically the same philosophy.

Teacher growth. All of the participants emphasized the importance of a workplace that allowed for teacher growth. Most of the administrators indicated they encouraged teachers to become involved in decision making, thus experiencing a sense of ownership. For one principal, an individualized professional development program that assisted teachers to become better in their field was viewed as being beneficial to teacher motivation.

Three of the principals stressed over and over again that they worked very hard at ensuring that their school's organization encouraged people to come up with new ideas, try new subject areas, challenge themselves, and take risks.

> I think there can be magic associated with teaching. This can occur when teachers do things with individual kids that turn their lives around; when they do something that for the rest of his/her life, that individual is affected by being in contact with that teacher. This is what I mean by trying to establish the kind of climate in a school that enables teachers to have the space that's required to do things above what the day-to-day job entails. The day-to-day job is, in fact, the minimum requirement. But there exists the possibility for teachers to accomplish things that I would have never considered possible. It had never occurred to me that this could happen in this school or in this community.

Another principal concurred: "I think that if the teacher is given the challenge of something new, and if they're a good teacher, they will need it. The thing is, you've got to keep giving them the challenges. And that's the role of administration."

One principal indicated that he saw the need for a "district statement of growth expectation," which, for him, would provide the kind of framework some teachers need to motivate them to perform on an ongoing basis with continual professional growth in mind.

> There is still the feeling with some teachers that when you start a process of motivating them to do better work, they feel an act of guilt and that they're being targeted unnecessarily. They feel they're doing a good enough job as far as the collective agreement and so forth goes, and, technically speaking, they are. However, all they're managing to do is grind through one more year just like the previous year, and gradually that starts to show, and it turns kids off their subject area. I believe if there was a district statement, someplace, in terms of a general teaching job description, perhaps that simply said it is an expectation that there will be continual professional growth, I think that would serve to go a long way.

Collegiality and recognition. Each participant described the teaching profession at the high school level as being isolated, compartmentalized, and fragmented. To combat the loneliness characteristic of teaching in such conditions, they emphasized the need to provide for teacher camaraderie and support. One principal mentioned that the format of his school's parent-teacher interviews had produced a positive side effect for teacher collegiality.

> An interesting byproduct of the arena system that turned out to be very positive for the staff was the opportunity for staff to interact with each other during slack times. We arranged people alphabetically, and many teachers were able to get to know people with whom they had hardly exchanged a good morning. It was a rather odd byproduct. I had no idea that this would happen.

Another principal referred to the renovation of the school's staff room and the addition of a conference room as promoting colleagiality.

> You would have to know what we had here previously. It was horrible. There was not a place for teachers to sit down and relax and enjoy themselves or talk with their colleagues. Consequently, they were compartmentalized, a little group here, a little group there; no one got together. . . . We constructed a good dining room, a place where people could get together, sit down, and enjoy themselves. At least it became possible to get away from what you do all day for half an hour a day or an hour, whatever the case may be. We also designed a conference

> room that they could use to bring in guest speakers or to just facilitate the things that they do and thus make life a little more comfortable for the teacher in the school. Teaching is tough enough. In the long run that pays off, and I think it's paid off here.

For another principal laying the groundwork to facilitate teachers' getting together within the building as well as with other high schools was seen as crucial to staff motivation.

> I think it's extremely important to bring teachers together. I even go beyond just bringing my people here together as a group. I like to bring in people from other high schools as well. It's good for teachers to just sit and interact. You'll find with teachers, whenever they sit together in a social situation, they will visit and get through the niceties, and then their conversation always ends up back in education. I think that it's the sharing of ideas and the arguing of pros and cons that helps to motivate teachers and gets them going. The only way they're going to do this is to interact.

The participants indicated that some structure for teacher recognition had to be included in their school's organization in order for teachers to feel motivated. Most of them indicated that whatever form the recognition took, it had to be genuine and meaningful. Several principals seemed to agree that intrinsic rewards produced the biggest returns for the teachers. They stressed that teachers feel satisfaction with student successes, parent and student thank you's, and job fulfillment. Most of the principals appeared also to emphasize that a formal reward policy was difficult and that they chose a more simplistic approach in the form of reduced supervision, complimentary letters, thank you notes, and surprise gestures. They all appeared to support an individual teacher's decision to drop out of an activity. As one principal stated,

> It seems to me that if a basketball coach loves coaching basketball and if you key it up for that person so that is, in fact, what they do, then they should be having a good enough time, that they don't consider it to be work. Then it is a

> labor of love. If, on the other hand, someone says that they don't think they'll coach next year, I say, "Thank you very much for the work you've done so far. We'll look around for somebody else. I don't want you coaching if, in fact, it's messing up your personal life or it's wrecking your family or it's not what you want to do at this time; then you shouldn't do it." It's our problem to find someone else.

Trust and communication. The notion of trust and communication was mentioned as the participants discussed how the school's environment served to affect teacher motivation. Two principals commented on the idea of a "boss-employee relationship." One principal recognized its presence and indicated that he accepted the fact that the teachers would not feel comfortable coming to him as readily as a counsellor. The other principal felt he had his teachers' trust as much as was possible.

> I would say it's hard, though, to get the unfettered truth here in the office. It's hard for people to really level with you. I don't know how you get that. I don't know how you ever achieve total trust so that a teacher can come in here and say, "You know, I think that decision is one of the dumbest that you've ever made," or "This is catastrophic to this school." I don't know how you achieve that. I don't know whether I have it or not.

A third principal's insistence on an open-door policy and a "no-appointment-necessary" practice ensured teacher contact, ongoing communication, and the building of trust. His position was portrayed best by these words:

> You know, people come in and say, "Can I do this?" and I say, "Yeah, do it." They say, "Do you want to sit in on the committee?" I answer, "No, I don't want to sit in on the committee. I trust you to do it. Do it to the best of your ability. Keep me informed. Let me know if I can help you. But I trust you to do a good job."

Workload and involvement. The participants commented on the teachers' workload and the extent of teacher participation and involvement as having an impact on staff motivation. They identified scenarios such as being a new teacher, teaching a new course, the marking load, extracurricular involvement, and heavy classes as potential stressful pressures for teachers. In particular, two of the principals singled out the teacher who does not get involved as being of concern for teachers.

> I think teachers sometimes resent the person who sits on his posterior and doesn't do anything. I know at times it does bother them. It is a big pressure, and that's difficult to work with. I'm not so sure teachers resent what's happening in classrooms, 'cause they don't really know, but I think it's more in the extracurricular type activities. They say, "I'm involved with this, this, and this, and look at him: He doesn't do anything."

Two participants identified the community school structure as contributing to the workload of teachers: "It's a community school. So there is an additional factor involved in being a member of the staff, 'cause you expect teachers to do things that are not necessarily expected in other schools." These principals stressed that it was their responsibility to ensure that they provided support within the school's environment for this added responsibility--be it from within the community or in the hiring of specific personnel.

One principal referred to his school's "egalitarian approach" in ensuring a degree of equity and fairness of teaching loads, with all staff having the opportunity to teach some senior-level courses.

With respect, then, to the environment of the workplace, the principal participants discussed such factors as the school's climate and whether or not there was provision for teacher growth, collegiality, recognition, trust, communication, and equity in teacher workload and involvement.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the five administrators discussed at length the many factors that they perceived as playing a significant role in teacher motivation. Their comments included references to the individual orientations of each teacher; working conditions; the external environment, of which both the school and the teacher were a part; and the school's organizational climate. Both the people element and the environment of the workplace were identified as contributing to the school's organizational makeup. As the administrators shared their thoughts on which factors motivate and which ones do not, they highlighted the actions or strategies they used with their teachers. The next section addresses the strategies these administrators identified.

What Are the Strategies Principals Use to Develop Staff Motivation and Commitment?

The interview data provided many in-depth descriptions of how principals attempt to motivate their staff members. The participants discussed in great detail various strategies they used in their efforts to initiate, maintain, and increase teacher commitment. The following categories describe the strategies and skills the five principals perceived as being beneficial to them in their efforts to work towards establishing a motivated and committed staff.

Model

The administrators indicated that modelling was an important strategy they regularly employed to motivate their teachers. Two principals suggested that they continually proposed new ideas and encouraged teachers to improve their performance. Both administrators referred to this as demonstrating a "restless creative spirit." One of the principals stated:

> I have to role model a lot. I have to sort of demonstrate this restless creative spirit, and then you'd be astonished at the response that you get. If that's there it comes back to you tenfold. I'm always amazed at how responsive the teaching group is to that. Once you get the whole staff basically thinking that way, that in itself is motivating, and then if you have the odd person out who isn't fitting that kind of pattern, they soon feel pretty uncomfortable. Either that motivates them to change their behavior and kind of join the team, or they'll say, "Oops, this place is just too crazy for me. I'm going to disappear." They'll take off and try and find another place in which they can fit more comfortably.

For this principal, talking to staff informally, organizing staff meetings, and using written communication were all means whereby new staff members could hear about and generate different ideas and suggest ways for improvement.

> If you have an expectation that teachers will be highly motivated, will continually upgrade their skills, knowledge, and aptitude in their subject areas, then I think it's important that the principal set an example at the school level. I should have informal conversations with individuals in and around the school, and I should devote entire staff meetings to examining what is new in our business and what direction do we want to move in. "What do you think of this idea?" is, I think, a very common opening remark that I should use in a conversation. I believe it is critical for me to model that. I expect department heads to do that, and I expect teachers with their kids to always try different instructional strategies. It's incumbent on me to demonstrate that kind of restless spirit in this most critical of businesses. You must always be examining new and different ideas and different approaches.

The notion of modelling the expectations one has for a staff was emphasized by all the administrators:

> The key thing that I think a principal has to do in terms of motivating, and this is the same advice for the vice-principal, is you have to practice what you preach. If people see me walking in here at nine, nine-thirty in the morning, not being around, and leaving at three-fifteen in the afternoon, if they

> think I'm not in the hallways, not involved extracurricularly, and then I say to them as the principal of the school, "Now, look, I want you to do more. You've got to get involved. You can't just come and teach your class and leave at the end of the day," I've got a problem. You've got to lead by example.

Several principals discussed the importance of displaying what one administrator referred to as "inborn qualities." In their comments, they emphasized that it was necessary for them to be outgoing, warm, friendly, energetic, enthusiastic, visible, and good listeners.

For all of the administrators, modelling entailed getting involved. One principal described the benefit he received from being involved in extracurricular activities:

> I enjoy coaching, but there's an ulterior motive there, too, because kids like to see that. It's a nice break in the day for me, and I involve myself in student activities where kids get a chance to see what I do. That has done an immeasurable amount of good for me over the years. It helps my job. It also gives some idea to teachers that "If he can do it, maybe I can do it."

For two of the administrators assuming a teaching assignment was seen as an important way of showing staff that they shared the same workload, that they understood what was required, and that the efforts of the staff were appreciated. "Do the kinds of things yourself that you expect the teachers to do, and then they don't say, "Oh, administrators. They just sit in their office; we don't know what they do."

Two of the principals discussed the importance of modelling professionalism. They indicated that they felt their performance and conduct were highly professional.

> If we're going to call this a profession, then I believe that there's an expectation that people perform as professionals when they're on the job site. They should be big enough to leave the home problems at home. I don't expect people to listen to me ad nauseam about my problems, and certainly not on the work site. I'm here to put in my eight to twelve hours or whatever it's going to take to get the job done, and I'll worry

> about the home life on the home front. Maybe it's because I feel that I can do that myself that I expect other people to do that.

Two of the principals commented on the importance of modelling the school's vision or, as one principal described it, "a clear mission statement." These administrators agreed that teachers must know what the school is all about and where they fit in before motivation can take place.

> I don't work on a clock. A teacher, in my estimation, who's a good teacher should operate in the same fashion. Number one, they should be concerned with the well-being of the students. This whole building is just some place we come to work. I hope teachers feel the same way, and I think that the majority of the people here do. They are here for one reason and one reason only, and that's to help young people get an education. I have found that successful teachers are motivated themselves, they're committed, and they make absolutely sure that kids are getting the best deal possible.

Recognize

The participants indicated that they felt it was critical to their staff's motivation to recognize individuals for having done a good job. In describing what they do, they used language like "appreciate, compliment, pat on the back, emphasize the positives, perks, compensation, bouquets, thank yous, and rewards. As one principal related:

> The most important role is to provide recognition for things being done. I think without giving it a lot of thought that would be one of my most important roles. I must say to people, "I really appreciate what you're doing for the kids in this community, I really appreciate what you're doing as a member of this staff. You are carrying your fair load." When people are recognized, they continue to do and to be recognized. If the people who always do things say, "Why am I killing myself? Nobody cares anyway. Kids don't care. Principal doesn't care. Parents don't care. So why? I'm not getting paid any more for

> it. I don't get any more holidays. I don't get any new job offers," it is harder to keep people going when they have that kind of attitude.

Two of the principals stressed the importance of ensuring that everyone on staff is aware of the contributions and accomplishments of individual staff members:

> I found that there's nothing greater to affect morale than to be continuously positive with people. Pat them on the back, and try to do so publicly as much as possible. At virtually every staff meeting I will do a bit of it myself. I will thank people for what they've done in the last little while and then give an opportunity for other people to do the same. It's amazing how that comes back too.

The principals appeared to agree that whatever form the recognition took, it had to be genuine, real, meaningful for the teacher, and not contrived or phoney.

> I think the administrator has to be like the teacher in the sense that you have to be truly yourself. You have to do what works for you, what isn't a lie, what's genuine, what's real, and if you're lying about it, teachers can see through it, just like the kids can see through in two seconds if you're lying to them as a teacher.

The administrators identified specific techniques they preferred to use when recognizing their teachers. These ranged from surprise notes in the mailbox for a job well done, to carnations at an emergency staff meeting, to spare time in the timetable, to personal letters acknowledging teachers' contributions, to the option of out-of-town conferences.

> I try to present as good a situation for them as possible. With their teaching, with their timetable, with perks that they might have coming to them because of what they do. There's no secret about me, if a teacher does a good job, I make sure they get the extra goodies. Now, if a teacher does nothing, that's what they get, is nothing.

One principal emphasized that he objected to using extrinsic rewards. He expressed the concern that because value judgements are involved on the part of an administrator, it is often difficult to determine who gets what reward. In his opinion, teachers should work on projects only for a personal sense of accomplishment or self-fulfillment. He indicated that too often extrinsic forms of recognition are taken for granted and have no special significance. As he stated:

> I believe people should do what they want to do. If running a students' council does not give you satisfaction, does not give you fulfillment, if the negatives outweigh the positives, then you probably shouldn't be doing it. No kind of extrinsic reward will change that very much. If we start giving extrinsic rewards for good deeds, then they stop being good deeds and become part of the job. I don't regard work in and around the school as essentially different from work in and around the community. People do wonderful things through the church, through minor hockey or other minor sports in the community, and they work with volunteer organizations, the Food Bank and so on, I think that's just part of being a citizen in the world. I'm not sure that being a good citizen should require some sort of payment at the end.

Facilitate

In their efforts to sustain teacher motivation, the participants appeared to take on a facilitative role. Their comments seemed to demonstrate that whenever possible they endeavored to be as supportive as possible of the teacher's situation. Throughout their discussions, the five principals emphasized that it was important to care for their staff as people, to provide encouragement, and to uphold their teachers' interests.

Several principals discussed the need to be available to staff, to be a good listener, and to show empathy and understanding. They indicated that a caring attitude toward staff builds the teacher's confidence and trust in the principal and allows teachers to feel comfortable knowing they can come and talk and share because they are certain the moral support will be there. This has tremendous payoff for teacher motivation. In the words of one participant,

> If you don't have anybody who cares or if nobody ever goes into your classroom to see what's happening, you're doomed. You're just going to get into a rut again, and you're not going to get out of it. And I don't think that's good for anybody. I think the best motivating you can do is to give everyone a pat on the back.

One principal indicated he worked hard at letting his staff know he cared by trying to gain insight into what kinds of things they did outside school.

> If you have an insight into what people do when they're not in school, and you have some idea of the kind of life they're leading, then you can carry that over. It relates very well to what they do in the school.

Two administrators commented that sometimes they had to caution staff members to slow down. One of them stated:

> I had a super teacher here last year, just gung ho, had everything going for her. I got her a job at another school, and she came in a couple of days ago and said, "You did mention to me that maybe I should consider slowing it down just a little bit. I finally understood what you meant. If I don't watch it, I'm going to be burned out by the time I'm 25." And I said, "You would be. Don't lose that motivation, but space it out."

Another principal concurred when he said,

> It is a concern . . . you're going to get yourself in the hospital, and (a) that's bad for you, and (b) that's bad for your kids, and (c) it's bad for us as a staff, so slow down. Sometimes people have to be cautioned.

All of the participants indicated they try to be supportive with teachers by being receptive to new ideas or projects, by providing necessary funding or resources, and by just creating the best possible situation for teachers. As one principal commented on a department's new initiative,

> "Go! Sounds fantastic! Let's do it! It's great for the kids, it's great for the community, it's great for the school system. We're going to get some good ink on this. Let's round up some money for it." We presented it to our bosses, and they were excited as could be about it, and they're providing the necessary funds for our budget.

With respect to establishing a supportive climate, one principal stated:

> I can't motivate people. You know, I cannot physically take them and motivate them. That's not possible, but what I can do is provide a situation for them which has the best possible conditions in which to work. Then I can give them the support they have to have in order to do a good job. I think any teacher will buy that.

All participants used specific techniques in demonstrating their caring and support. These included phoning home personally when a teacher was ill or there was a family death, ensuring an open-door policy whereby teachers were not compelled to make appointments to see the principal, memorizing teachers' names before the school year began, sending personalized birthday cards, constructing a new staff dining room and conference area, and continually checking on the well-being of staff. This principal expressed it in this way:

> I fill that cotton-pickin' candy jar up three times a day. And that has really changed in the last three months. I could have that candy jar there and fill it about twice a week. Now, it's constant, which is a good measuring stick of how many people come in. Sometimes they just come in for a candy. But most of the time it's "I want to check this with you," or "What do you think of this idea?" or "this student," or whatever." For example, when you were sitting out there, one of the teachers came in with a problem about a work experience student. You don't have to make an appointment for that. Each teacher in this school is also very busy. If they've got to wait two days for an answer or five hours for an answer that they need right away, it becomes very frustrating.

For another principal, it was important to use "spies," so to speak, to ensure that he had a grasp on the well-being of his staff members, in other words, to somehow achieve a sense of whether or not it was a "happy ship." He put it this way: "You've got to have the spies out there.

You've got to have the people who will come and say, 'Well, something is wrong in this area,' or 'Such and such has to be corrected.'"

A third principal stressed that he continually worked at making teachers happier because "the happier the teacher, the happier the student." For him an emphasis on the teacher's social life demonstrated caring and support.

> A lot of emphasis, I think, has to be put on the social life of teachers. That's why I like to see staff parties. Anything that can bring the group together is vitally important. I don't see how people can do a good job in a place where they're not happy with one another or they're not happy with themselves.

There appeared to be differences between the principals in the degree to which they perceived themselves as becoming personally involved with staff concerns or problems. Two of the principals indicated they preferred to direct staff members to more qualified personnel in outside agencies or to make them aware of the services available at the central office level. One principal suggested that he was always willing to be of service and ready to offer advice but that to him his strength lay in encouraging staff and acting as a resource. He most liked to "celebrate" with staff new and different things they had accomplished or tried or had happen with students. Another principal insisted he always made himself aware of problems teachers were experiencing and assisted department heads and administrators in directing teachers to get things cleared up. He commented: "I can alert the people downtown and maybe get teachers to go see the experts. I can do that; I can look out for them. The individuals are not going to come to me with their problems." This principal emphasized that he perceives himself as a buffer between his teachers and the strong parent association. For him, it was necessary to agree cautiously to the kinds of things the parent group asked of his staff in order to avoid adding pressure to his teaching staff.

> We have a very strong parent association. If you listen to everything that they want, it becomes ridiculous. I attend those meetings, and they accept my decision. If I think it is a beneficial proposition, well, certainly, we'll do it; if not, then I'll tell them so. Teachers don't have time to be running around every night; they do enough in the daytime.

Three of the administrators appeared to become involved with their staff on a more personal level to address individual crises. For one principal this implied getting to know as much as possible about teachers personally and in this way providing a framework to "nudge" those that needed encouragement, to help certain people "ride out a storm and get back on track," or to "nurture" the means for those teachers to achieve the "greatness" of which they are capable. This particular administrator expressed some frustration at not having any formal training with which to deal with personnel problems. Suffice it to say that, for him, a plan of action implied "playing it by ear" or "mak[ing] it up as I went along."

> Hardly a day goes by when something doesn't come up that someone is going through, some sort of personal crisis, how to deal with that. How do you help the person ride out the storm and get them back on track? Frankly, I think every administrator I've ever met makes it up as they go along. I still haven't got a kind of cookbook you can go to and sort of look in the index and say, "Well, under divorce, . . ." and you go from there. The difference with teaching from most jobs is that in most jobs you can hide somebody for awhile. You can change their job into a different office or a different assembly line or do something. With teaching they're right out there every morning. So when you show up to work the next morning, even though you're falling apart on the inside, you must have it all together in order to face the kids.

A second principal stressed that he liked to know what was happening in the school and that he visited the staff room to share in teacher discussions to let them know his position, to ensure that they understood he had their best interests at heart, and to ultimately show them his humanistic side.

> I go to the staff room all the time. I go because I want to share in their discussions. I'll join right in. I think that helps because they know that I have an opinion like everybody else, and yet I'm going to base my decision on what's best for the school. Even though I may have an opinion, I will not necessarily make my decision based on that. I think it helps teachers to get to know me informally, on a more personal basis. I have a lot of teachers who will come in here just to talk, not about school, just talk, and that's good.

The third principal insisted on visibility and an open-door policy that welcomed teachers coming into his office to clear away any barriers between himself and the staff. He often indicated that he tried to cover for staff because he recognized how "tiring" it was to maintain the enthusiasm required to face the particular concerns associated with his school.

> If you lock yourself in here and you set up a barrier between yourself and the staff, you'll never know what's going on, but if you're around and if people feel comfortable, then they can trust you, and that's a key word. People are not going to come and complain if they know or believe that that complaint is going to be used against them. Be around, keep your eyes and ears open and respond. Respond where you can, and if you can't respond, explain why you can't respond.

This administrator perceived himself to be a teacher first, and, above all else, he avoided the label "boss."

> I see myself as a Theory Y person. I hate the word boss; it is a four-letter word. . . . I am a teacher, I'm a member of the staff just as everybody else is, and if they have to see me they see me, I mean, I am no better or no worse, and if the door is open people come in. If the door is closed there is a reason why I am not available to somebody who wants to come in. Call it collegial. It's not the boss, or at least I hope the staff sees it the same way. It's not a boss-employee relationship that I want. I think that kind of relationship is very detrimental to staff morale.

Develop Staff

All of the participants attempted to encourage staff development by listening to staff, by involving their teachers, by allowing for collaboration and a sense of responsibility, and by encouraging growth. In their comments, the participants confirmed that staff development was crucial to teacher motivation.

The administrators stressed that they felt it was important to give teachers the opportunity to express their ideas, their concerns, and their needs. For most of the principals, this implied proposing ideas and allowing teachers to develop further the concept or the project, thus ensuring their involvement in the decision making within the school. As one principal stated, "The leadership that I try to provide is to throw out ideas for them, to provide a vehicle by which they can be a part of the decision making." Another principal concurred with these comments:

> I just sat there. All I had to do was generate a little spark of an idea, and the next thing I knew, they put it together. So that kind of thing I think is important for an administrator to do. You have to make sure that you can come up with the thread of an idea and then let the others develop it.

One principal emphasized that he made a point of hearing from everyone on staff and that he devised ways to ensure that all staff had an opportunity to express their opinion.

> An example of that, I guess, would be what occurred at our staff meeting on Wednesday. We had instituted an attendance policy in October, and we wanted to see how it had worked over the year. The teachers at the staff meeting brought it up. In looking around the room, probably 2% of the staff was speaking; the others weren't. But I've got to know if they have an opinion. It's just that they're afraid to speak up in public. So I've broken them down into small groups, into departments, and I'll speak with each one. I will make everyone say something.

The participants appeared to feel that these efforts brought their staff closer together, that teachers experienced a sense of ownership when they were able to make a contribution to the school's direction, and in this way the staff could carry the motivation. As one principal stated:

> I think the real important job of the administration team is to make sure that the ideas that are generated fit with the school philosophy such that they're all channelled in the right direction, basically for the good of the kids. The other thing is, in a school this size, you've got to make sure everybody has all the facts about exactly what's going on. If you don't you're not going to get people to buy into anything, and it's going to erode their motivation. The other thing you have to do as principal or administrative team is be very receptive to everybody's ideas; no matter how ridiculous they might sound or no matter how great they might be, you've got to respond. This is good because it brings a staff this large a little bit closer together.

The five participants seemed to be relating that the task of developing staff cannot be accomplished by the principal alone, that teachers have a responsibility to be involved. The principals indicated that they used various actions to bring about collaboration. Each administrator stressed the importance of sharing the school's vision by involving staff to work as a team. In this way, teachers have a stake in what direction the school is taking. As one principal stated:

> I just really believe that when people see a direction that your organization is going in, and they have the opportunity to buy in, and they do buy in, then they are very motivated, and they do their job with much more enthusiasm.

A second principal confirmed this notion:

> It is to an extent my responsibility to make sure that staff morale is at a high level, but in order to get that done, you've got to rely on people within the building. Let them carry it. If they do it themselves they're going to feel more comfortable with it than if I do it for them. They don't want me to do it for them.

A third put it this way: "So to think that a principal can carry the vision torch, I don't think that's possible. I think it's a function of the individual's input." These principals agreed that whatever they tried to do within the school, it could not be forced or imposed upon anyone. Teachers had to be willing to accept the change, take responsibility, and thus establish ownership. One principal used the example of inservices to press home his point:

> My approach is to try to make it possible for those people who seek something to be able to do it. If they can explain to me why they want to go, then I'll do whatever I can to help them go. Once again, individual initiative seems to create more good things than something orchestrated.

This same principal emphasized that at his school staff members were not obliged to take on any extracurricular activity in which they did not want to get involved. He indicated that he refused to lay any "guilt trips" on teachers. He also commented that he would not attempt to move staff in a direction in which they had not had an opportunity to give input. In fact, he felt quite strongly that their collective contribution provided so much more than he could ever provide.

> I think that you have to believe that the collective mass of teachers in this building, 75 bodies or whatever there are, if not individually, but certainly collectively, have much more wisdom, much more skill than I would ever possess.

The many comments made by the participants demonstrated their belief in providing for teacher growth by encouraging teachers to try new levels or new courses, to get involved in initiating policy, to develop new programs, or to extend themselves personally. As one principal described this notion: "I think a teacher must be given the challenge of something new and if they're a good teacher they will need it. You've got to keep giving them the challenges; that's the role of administration."

The administrators encouraged their staff to take charge, to move with an idea, and to develop it as far as they could. In their role as principal they would give the support, provide the space, remove the barriers, and celebrate the successes. One of the principals stated that it is a "juggling act to provide a basis for what is required for the job, and yet at the same time to provide the room or the space for people to go way beyond."

Another principal's individualized professional development concept was being designed to emphasize teachers' growth potential and their ability to improve in the area identified by the individual teacher. He described it this way:

> I want to get to a point where I can say to a teacher, "How do you feel that you can be even more productive than what you are?" If you approach a teacher and say, "You're doing a heck of a job now; how do you think you could even do a better job?" then you can establish the possibilities and set out the ways in which you are going to do this. Then I say, "How are you going to get to where you want to go? How long is it going to take you to get there? How are you going to know when you do get there?" . . . Then the principal can put together a nice, neat package that doesn't waste anybody's time. . . . All I want to do is take good teachers, make them better, take adequate teachers, and make them good.

Another principal's expectation in professional growth served to guide his actions in encouraging staff to extend themselves, to do things above what the day-to-day job entailed. He stated, "We expect teachers to be part of a team that works at continuously looking at fresh ideas in terms of relating to kids and helping them with various areas of learning."

One principal stressed that his staff must realize they have to take on the responsibility of devising new ways of solving problems or be prepared to have policies imposed by others.

> My selling point to teachers is that if we do not, in fact, come up with policies at the school level to deal with these [school dropouts], then somebody will impose them upon us.

> . . . I think it's incumbent upon schools to be working on the problem, to be exploring strategies that might work for the community they live in.

One principal used the word "empowerment" to describe how he sees his teachers' involvement in their own growth. In his view, empowered teachers are self-motivated because they have put their "heart and soul" into it.

> So the teacher is, in fact, responsible for something. The teacher is responsible for upgrading, the teacher is responsible for getting the curriculum together for the methodology. Most teachers really do a job of those things that they're responsible for.

Administrate

The five participants seemed to emphasize the importance of their role as administrator in ensuring the proper running of the school. Their comments indicated that they perceived themselves as being obliged to use planned actions in such a way as to be viewed as "Captain of the ship," all the while striving to maintain teacher motivation. Their efforts with respect to this notion centered around selecting the right staff, winning teacher support, and supervising staff.

Staff Selection

As the principals elaborated on what motivating actions they chose to select their staff, two ways of grouping their comments appeared to surface: staff recruiting and staff changes. In terms of staff recruitment, all of the principals maintained that they knew ahead of time what type of teacher they wanted to bring on staff. Two of the administrators stressed that they believed in being honest with teachers and letting them know exactly what they were looking for. As one principal stated:

> I'm a person that usually recruits what I think is the best possible teacher, and then we'll worry about what he or she is going to teach later. Everybody recognizes at the outset that they have to be flexible anyway in order to work for me. So they're quite willing to be flexible, to try different things, and they see this as an opportunity to grow, and that itself is an indicator to me. If someone expresses concern about having to teach a course or two outside their major, they are indirectly telling me that they are not very flexible and they're not interested in growth. They have to show me that they're willing to grow themselves first; then I know that they'll impart this innate desire to continue to grow to their students.

Whatever they were searching for, be it a mix of personalities, strengths, and perspectives or a unique specialty subject area or a gender balance, the participants confirmed that they recognized the significance of staff selection to overall teacher motivation.

The participants also commented on the need to address staff changes as a function of motivating their teachers. All five principals remarked on the importance of teachers being prepared to move to new locations. As one principal commented, "It's important to keep a healthy turnover of staff." One principal provided specific insight into this notion. He indicated that some administrators may see their role as having to make some drastic changes and rebuild from the bottom up:

> One way is to go in and sort of try and stop everything dead and then rebuild, to, in fact, take a school and say, "Well, I have to tear it apart, I have to take almost all the bricks out of the wall and mortar them back in."

He agreed that there were schools, in fact, that "required a truly new broom to come in and just roll heads and shake up the whole school." However, this principal stressed that another approach may work just as well. His style implied accepting the staff as is and working with these individuals in the best way possible. He did confirm that by changing the staff, the most significant aspect of the school is changed: "You make the deepest changes by changing staff because that's the essence of the school."

Staff Support

For the five participants, obtaining staff support for their goals, projects, and school plan was identified as critical. They recognized that it would be an uphill battle to carry the load alone, that their staff must be willing to follow in the same direction. They emphasized that for this to happen teachers had to be motivated or they would not perform well. One principal stated:

> You try to please any number of people and different agencies within the community by what you do in the school. I'll go to any lengths to get people to think the way I want them to think. I could be completely autocratic and dictate what's going to be and what's not going to be, and people would probably do it. I don't think that they would do it with all of the sincerity that they have, but I think that they probably would do it. And that's foolish because when you want to get something done, you want to get it done in the best way possible. You want the people who are going to do it to be happy doing it. . . . You're not going to get everybody doing what you think they should do. That is a basic fact, so you start to work on getting as many into position as you can, people who do what you want them to do.

In their discussions, the principals' choice of language substantiates this notion of gaining staff support. They used words such as "What will the people accept? How far can I push a person?" or "It's a matter of selling them slowly," or "I do a lot of different things to convince teachers," or "It's just like dangling a carrot," or "I try to win their attention," or "I have to be nice to them."

Each administrator used specific strategies to convince staff and to ultimately gain their support. For two of the principals, selecting key people on staff ensured that their message would be clearly passed on to teachers or, as one of the principals commented, "picking key people to become the messengers." The second principal referred to this strategy as using "insurance measures."

> I feel that I have to select the proper people to bring with me, the right people in the right positions. I then expect them to do the motivating. I think it's a necessity to be able to bring key personnel with you when you move into a new school.

For another principal, showing the staff that he could do the job, proving that he was capable, was a necessary action. He commented:

> I have to make sure that I know what I'm doing and prove to them that I can handle sixty-five teachers, and I did. I walked in here in September and didn't know what to expect, and everybody watched me because they wanted to see if this guy could operate without what they called some of the key people in this building. Well, they found out that we got the kids registered with no problem, they found out I can learn how to operate the computer program with no problem, they found out that I can handle about three jobs at once. So you've really got to sell yourself, and you just hope that the decision that you made was the correct one.

This administrator stressed that, although he did a lot of work alone in this area, he also believed in working very closely with other members of his administrative team in order to present the best possible picture to teachers. In this way he seemed to be saying that a staff appreciates that they will be treated fairly and equally and will consequently be motivated to work.

> I've always worked very closely with the administration, no matter who they are. You've got to rely on them, you've got to show your staff and your clientele that you're a team, not individual players, and so I've worked very closely with all my assistant principals.

One principal used the technique of making his teachers feel good about what they were doing, that all their efforts were not in vain, and that they were all important to the overall plan.

> Now, the key thing that an administrator has to do is to keep reminding staff that their kids are pretty fantastic, and the reason they are fantastic is the fact that each and every one of us is doing something to make them the way they are. To assume that it doesn't really matter what you do, to assume that all of the kids are like that in all of the schools is nonsense! This is particularly true for the new people who have never taught anywhere else.

Several of the principals indicated that they spent a great deal of time working with their staff either individually or collectively in an attempt to arrive at a "certain amount of agreement and consensus." In this way the staff knows where the principal's interests are, and they are appreciative of the work done on their behalf. As one principal stated:

> There are situations where I let them have all the input they want. . . . It's a very simple proposition. The minute I come in and start dictating what's going to happen, how it's going to happen, I'm dead in the water. So there are times when you go with the flow, when it's to your advantage. The odds are tremendously stacked against the principal in a school, and here I'm referring to the numbers of people with whom you have to be concerned. You're dealing with kids, with staff, with parents, and with the community. You have to be a bit of a dancer to get around some of these things.

This same principal provided some interesting insight into the personal growth he had experienced in his efforts to gain the support of his teachers. He commented:

> So I think it's been good for me because it's made me stop and take stock of things every once in awhile. Before it was just straight down the pipe. In the old days I would have just pushed it right through. If you liked it you did it, and if you didn't you got out of the way. That still drives me, but the older you get the smarter you get, and I didn't need that kind of problem. Now I have to be a little more open with people, and I have to show them that I'm concerned about the things that either they're going to do or the things that are going to happen to them. It's been good for me in that respect.

Supervision

The principals indicated that they were required to employ strategies to ensure effective supervision which ultimately had the potential to affect teacher motivation. Many of the remarks made by the participants reflected their concern for the complacent teacher, the teacher who was not contributing fully. Their comments and insight into this area appeared to depict either a "hardliner" or a "soft shoe" approach. No one method was suitable for all types of situations, as they indicated they had to choose according to what was needed at the time. According to one administrator:

> In dealing with people, there are only so many different ways you can go. Mind you, it depends on the individual as to the way in which you deal with them. Some people require a little more gentle urging than others. A lot of people find it very difficult to accept criticism, even constructive criticism. Then there are others who realize and welcome the fact that they might be doing something wrong, and they want to do a good job. That's an individual thing; you play that one by ear.

In selecting the "soft shoe" approach, several of the principals stressed it was important to be both honest and positive, to sit down and talk to the individual teacher one on one, to keep in mind that it is impossible to force people. All the principals seemed to recognize the need to provide some sort of tight structure for "needling, nudging, and nurturing" those that required prodding. The administrators commented that there were limits on how far you can go with the complacent teacher; however, they mentioned there was always room for improvement. As one principal stated:

> I think that one can do some motivating. One can take individuals and work with them and build them up, change them, develop them, nurture them. I don't see much evidence of profound changes in the sense that you can take somebody who is lacking teaching skills and is really not very enthusiastic. You know, your classic boring teacher. . . . I'm not sure that

> you can make that person into something substantially different, although you could certainly make them better. I cannot make that person into a miracle worker or into a magician. I think you can approach adequacy, and I have had teachers who, for whatever reasons, were not doing the job. Every trick that I tried really didn't change much. Short-term little things seemed to work. I certainly learned that fear doesn't pay. It doesn't work. In fact, fear seemed to have a negative effect. The demand that planning be more thorough seemed to be met with even more hopeless planning. I think there are limits on increasing individual vitality.

Other comments by this same principal reflected some of the frustration the principals expressed at being unable to make a great deal of progress in their dealings with the complacent teacher:

> No workshop in the world would ever change that. No retraining, nothing. If that person is supposed to be a teacher you can try different tricks on the timetable and give them different courses and give them less demanding courses, but nothing really works, and those are tough to deal with. I don't have any of those people on staff at the moment, but I've had them.

The participants indicated they tried to visit classrooms and observe teachers to keep the lines of communication open. One principal favored the notion of mentors or interschool visitations or sabbaticals to try to motivate the teacher.

> I get teachers visiting other teachers, and not necessarily in the same school. I like to find other high schools where I can say, "Look, can so-and-so come and watch one of your gung ho teachers?" It does something for the teacher that's experiencing difficulty because they get a chance to get out of the building. They know that somebody cares, and yet they learn something by seeing somebody who is really, really great. That helps a lot. I've seen teachers as well who will take a semester off, go back to university. That, in my opinion, is a very good motivating tool as well. The other one, when you get down to the real crunch, is having somebody in that classroom who can actually point out things.

The significant point here for these principals seemed to be that, by demonstrating their concern and caring to staff, a valuable byproduct would be an increase in teacher motivation.

One final strategy discussed by two of the administrators which reflected this "soft shoe" notion included contacting individually specific staff members to assist with special projects or to relieve some of the more involved teachers on staff: "I try to get the person who sits on his posterior and doesn't do anything to start performing in other areas. If I can get that person to start doing something, then it makes everybody happier all the way around." In administration, the principals indicated that they perceived that "the Captain of the ship" was often required to ensure the efficient and effective use of teacher time. This same principal emphasized that he did not push people to join in, that it really had to be an individual choice, but that sometimes personal contact brought results.

> But sometimes I'll talk to some of those people and say, "You know, we need some extra help in this committee. Do you mind giving a shot at this? It's only a couple of days." Most often they'll do it, and I think deep down they appreciate the fact that they were asked and that they did get involved somehow.

Several of the administrators were very candid in their remarks concerning the "hardliner" approach. If an adjustment or change was required that would positively affect the students and/or the overall school picture, then these principals were totally frank with staff. In the words of one principal:

> I don't care which group you're dealing with, if you're particularly concerned with teaching, then basic honesty is number one as far as I'm concerned. There's no hidden agenda in the things that I do. I am completely up front with the teaching staff, and there are many times that decisions have to be made which are not pleasant decisions to make. Whether they come from me or whether they come from my supervisor is of no consequence. I happen to be the person in charge here, and if a teacher has to be declared surplus or I have to remove a department head or I have to do any number of things with teaching staff, that's my decision.

A second principal supported this firm stand in his comments:

> I think that sometimes when a teacher gets into the situation where they're not willing to accept all the positive stuff you do in terms of visitations with other teachers, etc., then you don't have much of a choice. If they're not going to accept that they need to be motivated or they need advice, then they'd better get out of the profession. We don't need them, and I know that's a hard-nose position, but I feel that way. You can offer all the help you want, but if the person's not willing to accept it, then I think for the sake of the kids that you have to document the person out.

This principal indicated that teachers should hear the complaints against them to avoid having teachers get "lulled to sleep because of routine." He stressed that you have to "jolt them with something to get them motivated again." For this principal there were times that required "hitting them straight on" to stress that a change must occur. He used an example of persuading a teacher to retire early.

> I've got one teacher right now, I'm almost trying to force her into retirement because she doesn't have it. No matter what we've tried to do with her, she just isn't with it anymore, which is too bad because at one time apparently she was one of the top teachers.

Another principal commented that the situation sometimes called for the injection of a little fear in order for an individual to recognize the need for a behavior change. The variety of techniques he used included "outlining contractual expectations" or "simply running a bluff." For him this implied the notion of "fear" when he said to staff members, "You're just not going to be here unless you start to perform." This principal emphasized that in most instances when he "mirrored the person" and pointed out the symptoms and concerns, the teacher would agree, and at this point it would be possible to suggest new avenues for the teacher.

> I found that with the vast majority of people, if you can first of all get them to admit that there has been a change in their behavior since times were good, you can then point them in a different direction and give them challenges. It seems then that the vast majority will respond to that very, very quickly.

Two of the principals commented that sometimes they had to transfer teachers out of their school because of the adverse effect of these individuals on staff morale. One principal stated:

> If I'm convinced that the teacher's twenty-sixth year will be worse than the twenty-fifth and they're not doing themselves any good or certainly the school and the kids, then I'll administratively transfer them. I will document my reasons, and I will fire that into the superintendent and recommend that the person be relocated. That person ultimately gets moved.

The other principal stressed that sometimes this sort of change forces teachers to examine their contribution and their motivation. The positive result that can occur is reflected in these comments:

> I'd say if I look back over the last 10 years, about 75% of the people that I have coached towards growth have responded and have, in fact, grown. Either they have grown within the location and stayed in the school or they've moved and they've grown. They've come back to thank me and said, "Wow, this is the neatest thing I've done for a long time." They're just as revitalized as can be.

Those administrators who commented on the "hardliner" approach emphasized that the choice of this avenue was not a common, everyday occurrence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as the five participants reflected on their role in providing for a motivated and committed staff, they discussed at length the various strategies they employed. The comments of the participants provided much insight into the many facets of their role. They perceived that they had a responsibility to model the level of motivation they expected of staff and as administrators were forced to confront the issue of teacher motivation. Each principal advocated recognizing and developing staff as a means of contributing to ongoing teacher motivation and commitment. These participants were adamant that responsible and effective administration must include an approach which demonstrated support, caring, trust, and empathy.

What Are the Larger Issues?

For each participant this question appeared to bring forth unique comments. In reviewing their reflections, three more specific questions seemed to require consideration: Where is the teaching profession going? What kind of an administrator am I? and what is the role of school boards and the teachers' association?

Where Is the Profession Going?

As the participants reflected on how teacher motivation related to other issues concerning education, they appeared to focus on the many changes that have transpired in the teaching profession over recent years. They identified three areas of change: societal expectations, today's student, and the teaching situation.

Societal Expectations

Several principals mentioned the pressure from the community to assume responsibility for things such as teaching controversial issues, playing surrogate parents, and offering an extensive co-curricular program. As one principal stated,

> School is more than starting at eight-thirty in the morning and shutting down at eleven-ten and then starting at twelve and shutting down at ten to three. Gone are the days when you can get by offering that.

In his comments this principal explained that his school felt a pressure to offer more than the basic high school program, that it was essential to the school's future growth to include a fairly extensive program as well as services to address topics such as sexual abuse. He stated, "You can say that's not our responsibility, it's up to the home, but the home isn't doing it." His response to the dilemma was to encourage his staff to do what was possible, recognizing all the while the overriding limitations.

> There is so much more to be done, and yet we don't have the time or the expertise or the people to do the job. You do what you can or what you feel you can do. I think most of the time people would say, "Well, yeah, I've got some time, let's do it." Maybe not as well as we could, but at least we can try.

A second principal expressed a concern that the teaching profession is getting "roped into a lot of things that I think we probably shouldn't get roped into. We're kind of the catchall." In particular, he stressed that society seems to feel that teachers should be able to change the attitudes of their students, which, in fact, is a task so much more complex than that of imparting knowledge. His view is that this expectation is a difficult one for teachers to handle. He commented:

> It concerns me that as we get into an increasingly complex world, we're expected to modify behavior, we're supposed to change the attitudes of people regarding the environment and regarding how people live their lives. I don't think we're effective at modifying behavior. Traditionally, schools have not done a great job at changing attitudes and behavior. It's tough.

Another administrator indicated that he felt that although teachers were aware of these concerns, they were enthusiastic about taking on the added responsibilities delegated by the community. In his opinion, teachers realize that these outside issues must be addressed before they can begin teaching any kind of subject matter. He commented:

> Most of the good teachers are great people and are welcoming that [added duties]. . . . Teachers are embracing with ever-increasing enthusiasm what society isn't doing, isn't teaching the kids. These things that homes, churches, Brownies, Cubs and Scouts, and so forth used to do, we've got to do because we can't do the normal teaching thing until we do some of these things. The teachers are saying, "Well, let's get on with it, get it done, and then we can do the subject matter."

Today's Student

For many of the participants, the increased teacher responsibility related to the kind of student that teachers are encountering in their classrooms today. One principal identified the need to teach students self-esteem, basic responsibilities, and study skills. This notion is reflected in his comments:

> I heard some interesting news the other day from these junior high folks who are talking to their elementary feeders. The elementary feeder people are saying things like, "Boy, is it ever different being a teacher now and working with kids who have been, almost since birth, totally day-cared and have not formed a bond with an adult anywhere. They are saying that we're having to spend more time being parents because we can't teach and stuff subject matter into kids' heads if the kids aren't totally and completely irresponsible, have never been taught even the most basic responsibility on the home front or the day care front. Nowadays elementary teachers don't know whether to refer to the home or to the day care. So that's going to be a challenge and maybe a major morale factor in the future.

Another principal commented also on the challenge of meeting the needs of today's students, the necessity of addressing problems such as student absenteeism, the lack of student commitment, and the views of students. In his view, teachers who confront daily these situations become tired, frustrated, and "burned out." As a result, they lose their enthusiasm.

A third principal indicated that he was cognizant of teachers' concerns but that teachers have a choice: "They can either try a different school where the problem may not be as extreme, or they can remain, accept that there are some feelings teachers cannot change, and try to work with these students." He also emphasized that these kinds of concerns, he felt, were more evident at the elementary and junior high levels than in the high schools. However, he made this comment:

> But there are some things that you can't do anything about, and if the students are out working at night because they are supporting themselves and they need the money to put bread on the table, then you've got to work with that kid. If the student comes in 15 minutes late for class first thing in the morning, you've got to try to be a little understanding because he worked until three in the morning.

Along this line of thinking, another participant indicated that he insisted that his teachers recognize the importance of their role in education and that it is a duty to meet the needs of their specific students. He commented:

> It's not a simple problem of just having a bunch of dolts sitting in your classroom wasting your time. All of them are human beings, and most of them have a story to tell of one kind or another. . . . Most of the literature indicates that teachers may well have a major role to play. If you've got a 20% student sitting there, periodically, sporadically, you can make a difference. Now, many of the staff don't like to hear that. They would like it much cleaner. I'm teaching and he's not learning; that's his problem, not mine. That's how we'd like it to be; that's the ideal world. But, unfortunately, we have a community mandate here to do something with kids.

He added that he emphasizes to his teachers that students are the reason for the school's existence, and all that teachers do must be indicative of that philosophy. He stated:

> The reason we're here is for the kids. The reason we're here is to provide opportunities for kids, and the effectiveness of any kind of motivation, upgrading, training, you name it, is only of value insofar as it does any good for the kids. I think that it's fairly easy to lose sight of the fact that

> without the students we're not worth very much here at all. I think this time of year we tend to lose sight of that fact. We tend to think of the fact that these kids are sort of a nuisance that prevent us from doing what we really need to be doing.

Teaching Situation

The comments made by the participants concerning the change in the teaching situation referred to logistical items such as "dollars," the economy, taxes, preparation time, teacher evaluation, class sizes, and teaching assignments. They indicated that these concerns seemed to reflect what was happening in society and were often items that teachers felt helpless to resolve even in contract negotiations. One principal discussed how he viewed the situation:

> We haven't had the big dollar increases for a long time. . . . People are at maximum, they're not getting any more income, their taxes are going up. . . . The dollars aren't changing, so morale goes down. Schools are getting smaller for the most part, and people are having to teach different courses.

A second principal presented his thoughts regarding this issue:

> Probably if you really wanted a well motivated staff, there's no guarantee, but give them more money, give them more free time. Neither one of those two is feasible. So I judge teachers and their abilities when they work under the tightest possible conditions that we have. We've been tight for the last two or three years, and yet these people still produce. They're still right on the money with what they have to offer and the way in which they present it and the benefit that the kids get.

For this principal students were the primary motivating force in spite of all the other environmental factors.

What Kind of Administrator Am I?

While the participants were discussing their perceptions of teacher motivation, they also provided insight into the kind of administrator they perceived themselves to be. The understanding the administrators had of their role was unique; served to guide their behavior on the job, and, in effect, provided the framework for examining further their concept of staff motivation.

Principal #1

When asked to elaborate on how he perceived his role in terms of staff motivation and commitment, one principal outlined three aspects: the role of setting an example, the role of participating in establishing school objectives, and the role of providing recognition. These areas served, then, to guide this administrator in terms of the strategies he chose to motivate his staff. In his mind, there could not be success without motivation. Some of his comments pertaining to how he perceived his role were:

> The most important role, I think, is to provide recognition for things that are being done. I think, without giving it a lot of thought, that would be my most important one. Saying to people, "I really appreciate what you're doing for the kids in this community, I really appreciate what you're doing as a member of this staff. You are carrying your fair load."

In addition, this principal displayed an infectious enthusiasm, a sharpness of insight, and high energy, His objective appeared to be to build a sense of community and involvement in the school by disclosing facts about himself and by using "we" instead of "us" in his communication: "Okay, I am a teacher, I'm a member of the staff just as everybody else is. . . . I am no better or no worse. . . . It's not a boss-employee relationship that I want." This principal's perception of his personal style in relating to staff involved enabling teachers to begin to identify with him as a person who was nonthreatening, someone with whom they could be open and to whom they could bring problems with the confidence that they would be listened to.

> If you lock yourself in here and you set a barrier between yourself and the staff, you'll never know what's going on, but if you're around and if people feel comfortable and if people can trust you . . . , then they will tell you . . . .

Principal #2

A second participant emphasized the high stress level of the principalship. He indicated that he felt it was necessary to put on a front or to portray a feeling of calm in order to deal with the many things that confront a principal.

> I would say that the principalship is the most stressful job in education because you're hammered from the superintendent, the parents, the kids, and the teachers. You have nobody to go back to. You're just always on the firing line, always.

He added that because he is the kind of individual who must know what is going on in the school and because he does not perceive himself to be a very calm person, he recognizes that the stress factor is even more of a challenge for him. He indicated that his philosophy in terms of dealing with the role was to maintain a calm demeanor and to present a confident image. He stated:

> I think that you've got to be outgoing, I think that you have to be warm, you have to be a good listener, you've got to be friendly, visible; I think that's extremely important in this day and age. You almost have to sometimes put on a front that things don't bother you. You seem to be on the attack from all levels at all times. And yet you have to portray the image that you can handle it, you have to deal with a lot of feelings.

This principal seemed to have his fingers on the pulse of all areas of school life. However, he did not appear to stop with the pulse-taking. This seemed to be merely the prelude to action, particularly if he was displeased with the rhythm or direction of things.

This administrator commented on the "old boys' club" present in his school district and that he did not have an affinity for this type of interaction because he felt it could often be "counteractive to the superintendent's office." Relying on his administration team and interacting with staff on a daily basis enabled him to meet head on the stressful challenge of the principalship.

Principal #3

The third participant confirmed the previous participant's perception of the principal's role as being challenging and possibly involving a degree of stress. He referred to himself as a bit of a "dancer" in trying to meet the demands of the job.

> So there are times when you go with the flow, especially when it's to your advantage. You see, with the principal in a school, the odds are tremendously stacked against you, and I say that with regard to the numbers of people that you have to be concerned with. You're dealing with kids, with staff, with parents, and with the community. You have to be a bit of a dancer to get around some of these things.

This administrator emphasized that he viewed the principal as the decision maker in the school, the one responsible for everything that happened in the building, and the individual ultimately in charge of ensuring that the needs of the young people in the school were being met in the best possible manner. One gets the feeling that the building is irrelevant to the concept of a school, that what is important is the character of the relationships that take place within its walls, and between it and the outside community. In talking about his role, this principal attributed his success with staff to his basic philosophy built on three premises:

> One, are students happy coming to this school? Two, are teachers happy teaching in this school? And three, are parents happy having their kids come to this school? If I can feel secure in knowing that I have won more than I have lost on those three points, then to me I'm doing a fairly good job.

This principal commented that the job he does in motivating staff members has been unique to each of the schools in which he has worked because he sees every situation differently. However, he indicated that his actions were always based on support, honesty, and trust. He stated:

> So overall if you want to get the mileage out of people, you have to have support, basic honesty, and trust in what they do. And that buys a lot of bursaries. It doesn't put any money in their pocket, but it sure gives them, I think, a better sense of what they're here to do, and if they know they are going to get that support, they can do a much better job. That just makes the whole thing fall into place, and you have a happy teacher.

For this administrator, an integral aspect of his role was to serve as a buffer between his staff and the community. Always recognizing the workload of his teachers and their continual need for support, he indicated he determined to what degree the community put pressure on his staff:

> We have a very strong parent association. If you listened to everything that they wanted, that would be ridiculous. We cooperate, I think, to a point where I am prepared to let them know what fully means. I attend those meetings, and they accept my decision on it. If I think it is a beneficial proposition, we'll do it. If not, then I'll tell them so. Teachers don't have enough time to be running around every night; they do enough in the daytime.

Principal #4

The fourth administrator presented his view of the role of the principal as that of facilitator, one who establishes the best possible environment in which his teachers can perform to their potential. He confirmed the important impact an administrator may have upon a school.

He emphasized that the task of motivating a staff is an "inexact science," and he likened his situation to that of the classroom teacher:

> It's very interesting that I find the relationship between the principal and the teachers very similar to the relationship between the teacher and the kids. What works for one teacher doesn't work for another, and what seems to work for one administrator doesn't work for another. Attempts to do things that sort of fit someone else's mold don't seem to work very well. If you go somewhere and you see one person who has ideas in the sense of structuring the school a certain way, holding parent-teacher interviews in a certain kind of way, that sort of thing, I think it's very difficult to pick up that person's approach.

This principal referred to the concerns he had in terms of motivating his staff as being attributed to "human nature," to the fact that people are "imperfect." He believed that you cannot force staff to do anything that they do not want to do. He emphasized that his job was one of "squeezing out of a person the best they can offer" and that a principal should not be able to just get rid of people like cutting players at a football camp who just do not seem to have "a superior degree of talent." For him it was his responsibility to keep "putting the energy in, or it will entropy and get back to where it was before." This principal was aware of the political connotation of his job: "There are times when the role of principal is kind of political, well, very political in nature and is a changing one because what's right or what's the correct kind of role in one situation is not in another." The implications of this perception seemed to be reflected in his uneasiness in making value judgements concerning his teachers. As a result, this administrator appeared to be introspective, thoughtful about himself and what he does, and often cautious in his actions. As facilitator, this principal avoided increasing the anxiety level of his teachers. Instead, he indicated that he encouraged staff to work in areas with which they were capable. He emphasized that he assured staff that all their efforts and time contributions would be appreciated.

Principal #5

The fifth and final participant indicated that he saw a pattern beginning to emerge in terms of his role as principal. Although he perceived a sense of uniqueness, as he did slightly different things at each school in which he worked, he recognized that for him the most critical aspect of his job was to "needle" individuals to always try to improve themselves. He indicated that his particular brand of leadership or overall style of enthusiasm seemed to be what certain staffs needed. "It was as if they had been frustrated by the lack of motivation at the top and were anxious to have a green light to go ahead and do a few interesting things again." This principal discussed frequently the notion of "running some risks," of "pointing people in directions," and saying, "Go have some fun." It appeared that, for him, "the role is one of motivating the staff, revitalizing it, and getting the thing going again." In order to accomplish this end, he identified the relationship between the principal and the staff as singularly important:

> In the area of motivating teachers, I'd say it's [staff motivation] probably the most significant thing that a school principal does. The relationships that you have with kids and parents I think are important, but certainly the way that you relate to your staffs and how you go about creating the type of changes that are needed in your staffs are probably the most significant things you do. You ignore that role at your peril.

What Is the Role of the School Board and the Teachers' Association?

Some of the principals expressed concern that teacher motivation is often dependent upon what the larger environment dictates. Mandates, directives, and policies all originating with the central or governing agencies have the potential to affect teacher motivation and commitment either positively or adversely. For many of the administrators the frustration arose because the individuals at the school level were powerless to do anything about their concerns. The participants mentioned such items as funding, a supply of resources and materials, administrative visibility, and recognition from the upper echelon.

One principal indicated that for him the absence at the district level of a statement of expectation for continual growth for teachers deserved more widespread attention in terms of how it related to staff morale. His interests were described by these comments:

> I think that as a factor from outside the local school it [statement of continual growth expectation] can be a great contribution towards staff morale. . . . I think if any organization, whether it's a school or business, says clearly to the whole crew of employees, "This is what we expect from you as an individual: continual growth. We want you to be a better teacher, a better custodian next year over this year. We expect you to be continually looking for ways to get better." If that's a district expectation, spell it out. I think it certainly makes my role easier to some extent, and it's easier on teachers too, knowing ahead of time that this is what they're expected to do so they can set about doing it. Not having a statement leads them to believe that as long as they do the same job this year as they did last year, that everything should be perfectly rosy.

This principal maintained that the issue of teacher motivation should be addressed more specifically at the district level and that this responsibility should be given a higher priority.

Another principal questioned the value of the teachers' association's method of teacher recognition as a motivational tool. He stated:

> There are meaningful pats on the back, but there are lots that don't really mean a heck of a lot. They are not of any great value, and I don't know whether they provide any tremendous motivation for people. The A.T.A. pumps that kind of thing, little kits of stickers and gold stars and so on.

The comments of this principal touched on the larger issue of how to give meaning to recognition of teachers' efforts and thus motivate teachers to perform. Several participants stressed that attempts at recognition that originate external to the school must be especially real for the teacher, or they will produce little desired effect.

Conclusion

The participants' understanding of teacher motivation and how the concept related to many of the other issues confronting educators today focused on three areas. The principals expressed a concern for the well-being of their teachers in terms of where the profession was headed. Their comments provided insight into the kind of administrator they perceived themselves to be. Finally, the five administrators shared their frustration with the role of the local school district and the teachers' association towards teacher motivation.

Summary

The five principals who were interviewed provided a rich description of a motivated teacher, described the factors they perceived as affecting teacher motivation, presented the actions they chose to motivate the teachers in their schools, and expanded on the issue of teacher motivation as it related to other educational concerns.

As the participants attempted to provide a rich description of what a motivated teacher implied for them, they stressed that to be motivated was dependent upon the individual. Self-motivation was seen as a result of feeling good about oneself. They emphasized that different factors motivated different people. Teachers who possessed professional effectiveness in terms of dealing with students and strove for high standards of performance and expectation were also seen as being highly motivated. Seeking new challenges and developing ideas and strategies for growth were identified by the five principals as important to teacher motivation. They also stressed the need to be aware of the school's vision and to in some way work towards achieving the school's goals.

The five participants described at length the factors they believed affected teacher motivation. They mentioned that for every teacher there were the ongoing concerns related to working conditions which involved salaries, benefits, staff cutbacks, and hygiene factors such as class size, preparation time, and physical surroundings. According to the participants, today's teachers must face the added challenge of having to juggle the needs of home life, community involvement, and being a part of an aging teaching force. All of the principals confirmed the impact of the external environment, which included factors such as pressures from the parents and community, changes endorsed by the provincial government, society's ever-increasing problems, and the image of the school. However, the factor which in the opinion of these administrators proved to be most dominant in the minds of their teachers was referred to as the organizational climate. The participants discussed the people component made up of students, colleagues, and administrators, as well as the organization's environment, which took into account the school's culture, teacher growth, collegiality, recognition, trust, communication, and equity in workload and participation.

In striving for a high level of staff motivation, the participants discussed the actions they used to deal effectively with the factors affecting teacher motivation. The five principals emphasized the importance of modelling their expectations for staff. By recognizing the contributions of their staff in a meaningful manner and by facilitating teachers' efforts in a caring and supportive way, the principals indicated that their teachers worked harder and were happier. In the role of staff developer, the participants stressed that they involved staff in the decision-making process and encouraged collaboration and growth by listening to teachers' ideas and concerns. The participants referred to their strategies in recruiting staff, in supervising their teachers, and in making every effort to gain their support as being critical in striving for a motivated staff.

When asked for their views on how the concept of teacher motivation pertained to other issues concerning educators, the participants related their concerns as to where the teaching profession was headed considering its added responsibilities. The principals outlined specifically the role they saw themselves playing in terms of developing a motivated and committed staff. The implications as determined by school boards and the teachers' association were also seen as being a part of the larger picture. The whole focus on staff motivation seemed to be, in the eyes of these participants, necessitated by a concern for the well-being of their teachers.

Chapter 5

Themes Within the Interview Data

Introduction

Throughout the analysis process, the researcher identified several underlying issues or themes related to the notion of teacher motivation.

The intent of this chapter is to highlight the themes which emerged from the interview data gathered. Three of the themes, the role of students, ownership, and growth, reflect the needs of the teacher. The remaining themes, demonstrating the desire, managing the climate, and being pragmatic, pertain to principals and their efforts to sustain teacher vitality. The following sections discuss each theme in relation to statements made by the five principals who participated in the study.

The Role of Students

A dominant theme that emerged from the descriptive findings was the significant role students play in teacher motivation. All of the participants emphasized that schools exist for the development and growth of students. Teachers who interact well with their students and who perform to high standards for the benefit of their students were viewed as highly motivated by the five principals. Often the participants identified students as the frustrating component in a teacher's day, particularly at the high school level where teachers must confront absenteeism, a lack of commitment, opinionated young adults, and students working full-time or part-time jobs. Several principals indicated that they continually reinforced to their staff that it was the responsibility of a teacher to meet this challenge. One principal commented that he felt his staff was willing to meet the challenge of dealing with the changing needs of the young people of today. He stated: "These things that homes, churches, Brownies, Cubs, Scouts, and so forth used to do, we've got to do because we can't do the normal teaching thing until they get done."

In spite of the fact that students were often viewed as a negative factor in teacher motivation, the five principals insisted that, for their staff, the student component made teaching worthwhile. The human contact with students, the chemistry between a teacher and a class, the pride in being a part of the smiles on their faces, and seeing the fruit of their toils enhanced teachers' desire to do the best that can be done for students. The participants saw this as the overriding priority for the motivated teacher. Other motivational factors paled by comparison for the teacher striving to encourage students to achieve to their potential. To celebrate in their students' successes was viewed as the ultimate reward for a teacher. One principal stated:

> What we are able to do with the students in this school from September to June is our accomplishment, our work of art, our masterpiece, and if we see that we have done something that has great value, that's our reward.

Ownership

A second theme that emerged from the interview data was referred to by the participants of the study as ownership or "buying in." The five principals maintained that in order for their staff to feel motivated to work they must experience a sense of being involved, of making a contribution, of knowing that they could express their ideas and that they would be heard. One principal commented:

> You've got to make sure everybody has all the facts about exactly what's going on. If you don't you're not going to get people to buy into anything. It's going to erode their motivation. . . . As principal you have to be receptive to everybody's ideas.

The five participants differed on the degree to which they involved staff members in the school's decision-making; however, the principals indicated that they recognize the importance of achieving consensus or agreement on issues that would affect the lives of their teachers. They commented frequently that they neither would nor could impose, force, or push issues with their teachers. As one principal stated, "If I just sort of impose that rule on people, I think it would be a hard sell. It would be a hard sell in the sense of getting people to buy in." One principal referred to the power of the collective minds of his staff: "I think that you have to believe that the collective mass of teachers in this building, 75 bodies or whatever there are, if not individually, then certainly collectively, have much more wisdom and skill than I would ever possess."

The participants related that in particular when they were attempting to have their teachers understand and carry the school's vision and when they were implementing some sort of change, it was beneficial to have their staff acknowledge a sense of ownership. As one principal stated, "When people see a direction that your organization is going in, and they have the opportunity to buy in and they do buy in, they are very motivated, and they do their job with more enthusiasm."

Several principals discussed the idea that teachers have a responsibility to become involved, that they too have a stake in what is transpiring around them. Some of the principals referred to the importance of sharing and collaboration to achieve a sense of being a part of and belonging to. To combat the isolation and compartmentalization of teaching, the principals emphasized that they had a role to play in ensuring that their teachers were brought closer together through a sense of ownership. The end product in their view would be a happier, more enthusiastic, vital, and motivated staff. One principal expressed it this way:

> I think it's extremely important to bring teachers together. . . . It's good for them to just sit and interact. . . . I think that it's the sharing of ideas, the arguing of pros and cons that helps motivate teachers, to get them going. The only way they're going to do it is to interact.

Growth

Another theme that appeared to thread through the data responding to the four research questions was the notion of growth. As the participants described the characteristics of a motivated teacher, they emphasized the importance of looking for ways to grow and improve. One principal stated:

> To me highly motivated people have got this restless urge to always get better and to be better. If they don't have an idea of how they can be better in their classroom or of how the whole school can be better doing something, then they tend to have a narrow focus. They are doing basically what they did a year ago.

These principals referred to the complacent teacher or the teacher entrenched in a rut as the staff member who lacked a "restless creative spirit." For the participants, these teachers were willing to try teaching new courses and new levels, excited about sharing what they had seen or done or read, and anxious to get involved in new projects. They were considered to be the teachers least likely to experience burnout or stress, a lack of confidence, and ultimately an inability to get the job done.

The participants confirmed the necessity of an organizational climate that encouraged teacher growth. One principal referred to "trying to establish the kind of climate in the school that enables teachers to have the space that's required to do things above what the day-to-day job entails."

The principals discussed what actions they chose to allow for teacher growth. For one principal it was promoting the expectation he had that teachers would be in a continual growth mode. He indicated also that it was imperative that he recognize and identify staff prepared to meet that challenge. Other principals saw themselves as facilitators, providing support, advice, information, encouragement, and even funding in order to allow for the growth of their staff. One other principal indicated he was in the process of putting together an individualized professional development package which would permit teachers to identify areas for personal growth and the means to achieve their objectives. He stated:

> I want to get to a point where I can say to a teacher, "How do you feel that you can be even more productive than what you are?" . . . Then once you establish the possibilities and set out the ways in which you are going to do this, I say, "How are you going to get to where you want to go? How long is it going to take you to get there? How are you going to know when you do get there?" All that will fall into place with the proper amount of time and the opportunity to perform. All I want to do is take good teachers, make them better, take adequate teachers, make them good.

The participants emphasized in their discussions that although they were prepared to provide the best possible environment and structure for growth to take place, teachers had an obligation to assume responsibility for keeping personally abreast in the education field. They seemed to be saying that the teacher is responsible for upgrading, for getting the curriculum together, and for learning the methodology. Several of the participants were candid in their remarks about staff members who needed extra prodding, nudging, nurturing, and possibly even a more hard-line approach. Those staff members who were not prepared to make the necessary changes, who were not receptive to suggestions for improvement, and who were in effect adversely affecting students and their colleagues were often urged to move to another location or to consider a career change. One principal stated:

> If I'm convinced that the teacher's twenty-sixth year will be worse than the twenty-fifth year and they're not doing themselves any good or certainly the school and the kids, then I'll administratively transfer them. I will document my reasons, and I will fire that into the superintendent and recommend that person be relocated.

However, the participants stressed that they prefer a more collegial approach including positive, honest, personal contact. They indicated that they endeavor to put together a staff made up of teachers who are continually interested in being the best they can be and doing the best they can for students.

Demonstrating the Desire

As the principals responded to the four research questions and presented their views on teacher motivation, the notion of modelling surfaced frequently. The participants' persistent mention of the need to demonstrate their expectations and to set by example demanded that modelling be recognized as a theme.

The principals discussed how demonstrating their expectations assisted them in developing the kind of teacher with whom they most liked to work. One principal stated:

> If you have an expectation for teachers to be highly motivated, to be continually upgrading their skills, knowledge, and aptitude in their subject area, then I think it's important that the principal set an example on the school level. I should have conversations with individuals . . . in order to examine what is new in our business and the direction in which we want to move.

In their own unique ways, the five principals perceived that they "set an example" of professionalism, high standards of performance, a "restless creative spirit," and their philosophy of teaching and learning. For all the principals this entailed some co-curricular involvement; for others, taking on a teaching assignment; and for still others, stimulating staff to create new and challenging projects. One principal stated:

> I think if we stand up and make speeches about how people should behave, we should behave the same way. For example, if we say that people should be open and honest, then we shouldn't be defensive when people come and question us. If we say that we believe people should be flexible, then we have to show flexibility. If we believe that people should be prepared to work outside regular hours, then we should model it. If we believe that people should be able to change their work loads, direction, and so on, then we should be able to do that as well. Anything that you ask of anybody that's on staff you should be able to do yourself. For example, I think that administrators should teach. We're asking teachers to teach, so therefore we should model the importance of teaching. I do a fair amount of consulting on a district and provincial level because I believe I need to know how important it is for people to make appearances outside regular office hours. I believe that we all have to do administrative work. So I will be on committees and do those kinds of things. I also think it's important for me to tell people what I'm doing and model the fact that they should be telling me what they're doing.

In leading by example, the principals maintained that staff would be knowledgeable about the school's vision and therefore better prepared to become involved and to make a contribution. Some of the principals advocated an administrative team approach with their counterparts in an effort to have staff emulate by working collaboratively with colleagues.

For another principal, demonstrating a receptiveness to change and a continuous desire to improve was viewed as critical to sustaining staff vitality and enthusiasm. Several participants commented on the strategy of modelling their expectations for key people, knowing that these individuals would in turn "carry the message" to others in the school.

This theme of demonstrating the desire transcended the strategies the participants used to deal effectively with the factors influencing teacher motivation. The participants indicated that they felt that their actions created a climate which fostered teacher interaction, quality teaching, a quest for challenge, and a sense of satisfaction and pride. For these participants, the objective seemed to be to produce a staff that exemplified to as great a degree as possible the characteristics they perceived to be invaluable in a motivated teacher. Another consequence of modelling, one of even greater significance, was expressed in the words of this principal:

> Those are the role model kind of people. I can name you tons of names, but those are the gunners, those are the winners, the ones that kids relate to. Those are the people that create memories for kids. They are all positive about their experience in high school.

For these principals the development of young people was a number one priority. Therefore, to develop a highly motivated staff who provided so much for students was indeed a valuable goal to work towards.

Managing the Climate

One of the more dominant themes emerging from the interview data was the notion of how principals endeavored to create the best possible climate for a highly motivated staff. From the comments of the five principals, it appeared that they possessed an awareness of the many factors that have the potential to affect the morale of their teachers. They emphasized that it was incumbent upon them to devise strategies to combat the negative factors and to accentuate those aspects of the school's organization that serve to heighten a staff's sense of satisfaction and intrinsic value. This principal's comments supported this idea:

> I can't motivate people. I cannot physically take them and motivate them. That's not possible, but what I can do is present a situation which is as good as possible. I can provide them with the conditions in which they can work and then give them the support they have to have in order to do a good job.

The notion of creating the best possible climate in which teachers can work appeared to be the driving force underlying the actions taken by these principals to motivate their teachers. Their efforts in modelling the expectations they have for their staff were useful in showing teachers the parameters. By acting as facilitators, the participants endeavored to provide funding, resources, moral support, and professional advice, and in this way establish as advantageous an environment as they deemed possible. The participants displayed an understanding of the kind of atmosphere in which teachers feel especially good, one in which their efforts are recognized and appreciated. This principal's comments emphasized this point:

> The most important role I think is to provide recognition for things that are being done. I think without giving it a lot of thought that would be one of my most important. Saying to people, "I really appreciate what you're doing for the kids in this community, I really appreciate what you're doing as a member of this staff, you are carrying your fair load," that kind of thing. When people do and are recognized, then they continue to do and to be recognized.

In their efforts to provide for staff development, the participants were singularly cognizant of the particular actions that served to involve teachers, to allow for collegial collaboration, and to encourage teacher growth. This principal stated:

> I have a belief in the ability of individuals to make a difference and that establishing the framework in which those individuals can carry much further than I could ever visualize myself is the key to establishing some measure of greatness on staff.

In performing their administrative functions, particularly those relating to staff selection, supervision, and gaining staff support, the participants perceived that the objective of their performance was to produce the best possible milieu for their teachers. One principal stated:

> There are a number of things I have to get done as principal of this school. . . . You try to please a number of people and several different agencies within the community by what you do in the school. . . . I'll go to any lengths to get people to think the way I want them to think. . . . I will get their affection in some manner. . . . My job is to make sure they can see that there's a reason for doing the things that they are doing. It's not just because I want them to do something. It's because I would like to see them do something that is going to lead to such and such, and that it's going to be beneficial for either the overall situation in the classroom or the students.

All the participants' comments appeared to be directed towards this underlying sense of what would be best for their staff. This principal summed it up in this way:

> I do what I feel is best for the people in this school and only this school. I'm not worried about any other school. If I was there I wouldn't worry about anyone but them, but I'm not there, I'm here. If I can give them the best situation in which to do their job, then I know what the outcome is going to be. Kids are going to get the benefit. That's the bottom line.

Being Pragmatic

Another dominant theme that emerged from the descriptive findings was the notion of pragmatism and how it guides the participants in their efforts to motivate staff. Although the interview questions were not specifically intended to encourage the principals to assess their own leadership skills, the questions did stimulate the participants to reflect on their behaviors and to examine their own value system in a very subtle, personal way. The descriptive findings also illustrated some variations in the way that the participants viewed their role in affecting teacher motivation.

The principals brought a sense of realism to the discussion about what works best for them in motivating their teachers. One principal described it as an "imperfect science," another principal commented on having to "play it by ear," a third principal stressed that there are "limits as to how far you can go," a fourth discussed it in terms of "insurance measures," and the fifth participant spoke convincingly of a "pattern emerging."

Four of the principals implied that they were confident that their efforts to increase teacher motivation worked for them. In the words of one of the four:

> Well, I look at the staff survey every year. I look at the results, and I think that's a fairly good indication as to the way teachers view me and what I do. I'm very impressed with the results, and like I tell anybody who's interested in asking me what kind of a job I do, this is about as good as you're going to find. Nobody does a better job at administering than I do, and that may sound like I'm blowing my own horn. I am. I think I have had a lot of success in administration for a number of different reasons.

A fifth principal expressed more a feeling of frustration at not being able to go further with some staff. His views are reflected by these comments:

> You can try various tricks on the timetable and give them [complacent teachers] different courses and give them less demanding courses, but nothing really works, and those are tough to deal with. I don't have any of those people on staff at the moment, but I've had them.

The principals discussed the many little things that they perceived to be useful, thereby displaying an awareness of their own individual style. The comments made by this principal described one administrator's style:

> I deal mostly with individuals. I hardly ever do anything substantial with groups in the school. I try to get to know every teacher. I try to talk to every teacher at some length along the way. I try to get to know as much as I can about them personally. I try to get their confidence, their trust. I try and nudge them in different directions. I try to give them encouragement. I try to give them a boot in the backside if that seems to be what they might need.

It appeared that these principals' leadership styles were based on their beliefs and values. Each participant seemed to be saying that schools and what takes place within must be for the benefit of the students. Most of the principals also expressed the opinion that a positive relationship with their staff was valuable. They all seemed to give the impression that they had a repertoire of approaches or strategies that they had acquired through experience and that no one action was better than another. However, they also indicated that possessing an understanding of their teachers and the situation assisted them in their selection of the best direction to follow. This principal's comments supported this idea:

> I'd say it's [motivating teachers] probably the most significant thing that a principal does. The relationships that you have with kids and parents I think are important, but certainly the way that you relate to your staff and how you go about creating the type of changes that are needed are probably the most significant. If you have an English teacher leaving on sabbatical and you just simply advertise the position

> without considering the whole chemistry of how this position can be used to improve your staff, to improve morale, you do so at your peril.

Summary

From the ongoing analysis, several underlying issues or themes were identified related to the concept of teacher motivation. Three of the themes, the role of students, ownership, and growth, focused on the teachers' world, their needs, and their reality. It would seem, in the views of the participants, that the absence of these elements has the potential to affect teacher satisfaction and ultimately their motivation and commitment. The other three themes--demonstrating the desire, managing the climate, and the notion of pragmatism--underlie the significance of the principals' actions.

As the five participants expressed their views on the topic of teacher motivation, their desire to work towards establishing the best possible environment for teachers emerged as a dominant theme. For each principal, this signified a climate that included opportunities for teacher growth through challenge and change, and the carrying out of certain actions on their part to allow teachers to experience a sense of ownership.

In the process of reflecting on their role in teacher motivation, the principals discussed most frequently the need to demonstrate to their staff what for them was the meaning of being motivated and how one could strive to achieve that state. By promoting their expectations and their vision, the principals expressed the hope that staff would assist them in carrying the motivation to others.

The need to be pragmatic, to do what ultimately worked best for them, seemed to permeate the discussions with the participants. All the principals were apprehensive about their chances of achieving 100% success in developing a motivated and committed staff. However, they indicated an optimism in working with the teachers they had on staff to achieve the best possible situation.

Finally, there appeared to be consensus among the participants in their comments concerning the importance of students to the concept of teacher motivation. Each participant emphasized that because rewards are limited in education, it is essential for teachers to feel satisfaction in teaching students. For these principals, this is the reward for the efforts of their teachers and what keeps them coming back year after year.

Chapter 6

Findings, Reflections, and Implications

Introduction

This chapter consists of three major sections. The first section summarizes the major findings and their relationship to the themes existing within the interview data. Personal reflections in light of the research and appropriateness of the methodology are presented in the second section. The final section of the chapter discusses several implications for practice and research in relation to the principal's role in developing a motivated and committed staff.

Major Findings

The five principal participants in the study provided detailed descriptive responses which served to answer the four research questions outlined at the beginning of the study. Their comments regarding the characteristics of a motivated teacher, the factors affecting teacher motivation, the strategies useful to bring about a high level of teacher motivation and commitment, and their concerns related to the concept of staff morale provided insight and a greater understanding of how they viewed their role in teacher motivation.

All of the principals indicated that they felt responsible for the motivation of their staff and that it was an important aspect of the principalship. They demonstrated by their comments and the numerous examples of the actions they took in dealing with their staff that they spent a great deal of time and effort in this area. Throughout the study, it became apparent that the participants endeavored to create the best possible situation for their teachers to feel motivated and committed.

The participants' perception of what it means to be a motivated teacher was based on the premise that being vital and energetic is unique for each individual; what motivates one teacher may not be viewed as significant for another. Each principal portrayed an acceptance of their teachers as individuals. However, they were adamant in their comments that a motivated teacher is one who is concerned about doing the best teaching job possible, who seeks out challenge and growth, and who demonstrates a commitment to the school's vision.

The five participants outlined many factors that they perceived as contributing to teacher motivation. However, they all appeared to agree that teachers must experience a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment in their dealings with students. It seemed that beyond that, not much else was of consequence.

There were many similarities in the strategies that the participants indicated they used in working to motivate their staff. Specifically, the ways in which the principals recognized their teachers were surprisingly alike. Their actions reinforced the idea that when dealing with people, one has to be realistic in what can be accomplished. This pragmatic approach for some of the principals took on more of a hardline perspective than for others. For each administrator, the most relevant strategy appeared to be modelling the expectations and standards of performance.

With respect to comments made by the participants regarding issues and concerns related to teacher motivation, these five principals described an apprehension about what the future has in store for educators. The increased societal demands and expectations coupled with the added personal, family, and community responsibilities associated with an aging teaching force were viewed by the participants as being potentially detrimental to what education is really all about. Several of the principals expressed a concern for the well-being of their teachers based on their understanding of the pressures confronting educators in the 1990s and beyond.

All five principals emphasized a moral responsibility on their part to improve the learning environment for students and to provide for student growth and development to the best of their ability. It was apparent that each principal, by means of his own individual leadership style, worked hard to ensure that he challenged head on any obstacle in meeting this responsibility.

Personal Reflections

Contribution to the Literature

As I analyzed the interview data and reflected on the discussions I had with the five participants, I found many similarities with the findings presented in the literature. In particular, these administrators' comments seemed to refer to topics presented in the literature in the areas of motivation theory and research, the role of the principal, and teacher motivation.

Motivation Theory and Research

The principals expressed an awareness of some of the motivational theories, although their knowledge of the terminology was limited. Many of the factors they identified as affecting teacher motivation in their schools are reflected in the current literature. The perceptions they shared with me regarding the specific actions they chose to sustain and encourage morale were also emphasized in the writings on the concept of teacher motivation.

The principals discussed frequently the concept underlying Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory. They referred to such "motivation" factors that produce satisfaction, namely, the need for achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement, as being more significant than the "hygiene" factors of working conditions, personal life, and interpersonal relations. Although Miskel (1982) proposed that this theory had outlived its usefulness and that researchers should begin to look to other approaches, there still appears to be some appreciation for its worthiness in the views of these principals.

Vroom's (1966) expectancy theory and Locke's (1968) goal theory were mentioned by these principals in their comments regarding the importance of teachers' experiencing a sense of ownership and responsibility. The participants indicated that their teachers "work harder when they think that working harder is likely to lead to desirable rewards from the organization" (Hoy & Miskel, 1987, p. 192). The "rewards" varied for these principals according to the individual needs of the teacher and in relation to their own particular preference. This aspect of motivating teachers appeared to be complemented and enhanced when teachers were given responsibility for developing goals, allowed autonomy in achieving them, and permitted to select methods for evaluating their achievement.

The participants' comments appeared to also provide support for Hackman and Oldham's (1980) theory of job enrichment. In particular, they made reference to a need for teachers to experience meaning, a sense of responsibility, and a knowledge of the results with regard to the kinds of actions principals take to motivate teachers. As a consequence, they confirmed that their staff feel good about themselves, perform better, and, consequently, are internally motivated to work.

Much of the discussion for these participants centered on the notion of rewards or the need for some means of recognizing teachers. Lortie's (1975, p. 106) finding that the primary motivators for teachers are the intrinsic rewards of knowing they have "reached" their students was confirmed by these five principals. They also emphasized that the conditions about which teachers complain, namely, working conditions, interruptions, and time pressures, interfere with achieving intrinsic rewards but are not ultimately as meaningful.

Role of the Principal

A great deal of the literature proposed that the principal was central to a school's effectiveness and its success. These principals discussed and emphasized the importance of their role in ensuring a "mutually supportive administrator/faculty relationship" (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980, p. 110); in establishing a vision and having the ability to carry out their goals in such a way as to make a difference in a school (Rosenholtz, 1985, p. 381); and in creating an organizational environment which fostered teacher involvement, ownership, and commitment.

It became apparent throughout the study that these principals perceived themselves to be "people people" (Koerner, 1988, p. 37); that the principalship was a "highly personal role" (Wolcott, 1973, p. 88); and that "by acting as an enthusiastic, caring and consistent role model for staff, principals live out the expectations that they feel are important in the school" (Leithwood, 1986, p. 75). Combined with the notion of "professional confidence" (Rosenholtz, 1985, p. 381) and what Greenfield (1985, p. 17) refers to as "passion," the principals attempted to "create that intangible something, that ambiance of mind and spirit which encourages effective teaching and learning" (Morris et al., 1984, p. 83).

Moylan's (1988) eight characteristics describing an elementary principal's performance as an administrator were reflected in the discussions with these participants. Specifically, the roles of "enabler," "empathizer," "challenger," "collaborator," and "tactician" were revealed in the thoughts and perceptions presented by these five high school principals. Moylan's research confirmed, as this study appeared to, that the roles of teacher and principal are interrelated.

More importantly, the participants discussed the idea that they cannot be solely responsible for the job of motivating. As Vaill (1984) commented in reference to his "Time, Feeling and Focus" components of leadership, successful leaders "tend to concentrate their efforts on those characteristics and values that are clearly more important to the success of their organization ensuring all the while that they do not take on everything" (p. 94). Each of the five principals, in recognizing the need to be realistic and pragmatic, explained that they made use of key personnel in the school to foster staff morale. In this way, they perpetuated the notion that teachers themselves must ultimately be obligated to share in the vision and be involved in maintaining a quality school climate.

The notion of the principal's role of "manager-as-setter" (Koerner,

1988) of the school's climate surfaced frequently in my discussions with the participants. They perceived that their leadership style, grounded in their beliefs and values, set the tone in their school. Hodgkinson (1983) stated:

> The leader should be especially aware of the three value-action roles which he shares with his followers: carrier, educator and judge. As carrier he is the bearer and propagator of values, his own and those of the organization; as educator he is both teacher and learner of values, again with special relevance to the organizational field; and as judge he is critic and decider--the executive who visibly resolves value disputes and moves values into and out of dispute. (p. 216)

So, too, can one view these principals as "carriers" by their ability to demonstrate their expectations and those of the school district. As "educators" they appeared to teach their teachers what was valued in their efforts to facilitate, develop, and recognize staff. Finally, as "judges" they were obliged to be the administrator responsible for supervising, offering suggestions, implementing changes, and ultimately making the final decisions.

The work world of these principals was "highly idiosyncratic to the needs and dispositions of the particular principal" and the context of the particular school situation (Morris et al., 1984). In this way, the problems and solutions characteristic of teacher motivation were in reality shaped by the nature of each principal's personal perspective.

Teacher Motivation

Much of the research focusing on motivation from the teacher's perspective involved examining the factors that have the potential to affect teacher morale either positively or negatively. I discovered through my conversations with the five participants that they appeared to possess a sound grasp of what was important to their teachers. In their efforts to understand the work conditions of teaching and the factors that shaped them, the participants attempted to provide for teacher growth, autonomy, collegiality, the sharing of schoolwide responsibilities, and the making of important decisions. The degree to which the participants cultivated such an atmosphere appeared to be related to their individual leadership style.

The literature pertaining to the aging teaching force overburdened by family and school responsibilities and frustrated by the ever-increasing societal demands and curriculum changes was also referred to by the participants. I gathered from my conversations with the principals that there was a feeling of frustration, mixed with concern, coupled with an acceptance of the reality that somehow these issues had to be addressed.

The current literature on teacher motivation in the United States refers to such growing problems in American education as the need to recruit high-ability individuals to fill the teaching ranks, the dilemma of whether merit pay or career ladders will help retain the most talented teachers, the problem of teacher entrapment, the effects of court-mandated desegregation, and teacher burnout associated with a decline in budgets and public confidence in education (Dworkin, 1987). In the discussions I had with the participants in this study, these issues were not overtly mentioned. The five principals did allude to impending concerns as a result of increased societal expectations and a maturing teaching force. Their comments appeared to reflect the impression that the education scene in Alberta, at least, is in a much better position than that of our neighbors to the south.

Significance of the Methodology

My reflections upon culminating the study would be incomplete without mentioning the applicability of the methodology to this study's purpose. In my efforts to understand the behavior of these five principals, I chose a qualitative inquiry approach which, according to Owens (1982), supports the notion that "one cannot understand human behavior without understanding the framework within which the individuals under study interpret their environment" (p. 5). My thoughts focus on three aspects of the methodology--the research instrument, data collection, and data analysis.

In my efforts to gain a more in-depth understanding of the meaning high school principals give to the concept of teacher motivation, I feel confident that the semistructured interview permitted me to achieve that end. I maintain that the five participants were able to comfortably discuss their perceptions, views, and feelings on the issues relating to teacher motivation. In using open-ended questions, I was able to probe for more thorough explanations as was necessary.

The data were collected in a personalized, collegial, and professional manner. As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) proposed, "The interview is best used to gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insight on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (p. 135). I discovered that the participants provided me with valuable data because I kept them informed and insisted on providing them with the opportunity for ongoing input.

In adhering to a qualitative analysis approach, I attempted to provide both a descriptive and an interpretive account of the data gathered from the participants. As Powney and Watts (1987) stated, "Analysis must go beyond a simple description of the data" (p. 143) and requires the researcher to take on the task of "constructive interpretation" (p. 158). The major findings of the study were proposed as a result of the development of underlying themes that emerged from the data shaped by inquirer-source interactions.

I trust that the presentation of the data as portrayed by the participants has been faithful to their intent, that I have not been overly evaluative or interpretive, and that I have managed to confront the dilemma all researchers face: the notion of forcing the data. The words of Guba and Lincoln (1985) reflect this concern:

> Data come to us only in answer to questions, and it is we who decide not only whether to ask but also how the question is to be put. Every question is a little like the wife-beating one--it has its own presuppositions. . . . How we put the question reflects our values, on the one hand, and on the other hand helps to determine the answer we get. . . . In a word, data have meaning, and this word "meaning," like its cognates "significance" and "import," includes a reference to values. (p. 332)

Implications

For Practice

Although the study was limited to the views of five high school principals from four jurisdictions, the researcher feels that there are a number of implications regarding the issue of teacher motivation for faculty, principals, and school districts.

Sharing the Knowledge

Given the findings on motivation and how principals view themselves as being responsible for motivating their staff, prospective school principals may want to give special consideration to the various strategies these five experienced high school principals viewed as being effective for them. In particular, aspiring administrators should appreciate the importance of interacting with teachers one on one in order to obtain a better understanding of their faculty as individuals and of their respective needs. In addition, it is crucial that principals facilitate staff involvement to ensure that teachers "buy into" the values of the organization and the vision held for the school. By providing teachers with the proper climate supportive of opportunities for teacher growth, challenge, and change, principals can facilitate ongoing teacher commitment to the profession. Finally, prospective principals need to realize that their leadership style and daily behavior demonstrate to others how they view teachers and the role they play in student learning and development.

All administrators can learn from the experiences of the participants in this study regarding the need to possess the necessary skills to deal with the complexity involved in personnel management in schools today. These five principals expressed a degree of frustration at not having all the answers, at having to "play it by ear," and at having "to learn as they went along." This would appear to imply the need for previous experience, training, or inservice preparation in order for principals to begin to effectively cope with their responsibilities in dealing with people and their particular situations all day long. As a result of the participants identifying their frustrations and concerns in the area of teacher motivation, the establishment of a principals' centre to promote the collegiality of principals may be viewed as worthwhile. This would permit administrators to develop a community of professional colleagues, allowing for an expanded repertoire of different ideas and practices to respond to overwhelming demands to similar school issues. Principals must engage in their own professional development as they too need to be replenished and invigorated and require a sense of their own professionalism.

Recognizing Staff

In the findings derived from the study, all educators in administrative roles should respect the emphasis these participants placed on recognizing faculty for their accomplishments. Whatever form this acknowledgement takes, principals must ensure that it is genuine and not contrived or phoney.

Selecting Administrators

With respect to the selection process of aspiring administrators, school districts may find it useful to take into consideration the past experiences of candidates and how they have performed in situations requiring motivational strategies. This would serve to provide insight into the candidate's ability to transfer this knowledge and to apply it appropriately to the task at hand.

Each administrator demonstrated a unique leadership style. It would seem appropriate, then, to attempt to match the principal with a specific school situation whereby the individual's capabilities in motivating and developing staff commitment may be maximized.

Policy for Growth

This study appears to suggest a need for a district-level responsibility in establishing a statement for an expectation of continual growth on the part of teachers. This district emphasis would serve to assist principals in their interactions with staff and would underscore for faculty the value of seeking new challenges and accepting appropriate change.

Increased Professional Development

Administrators at the district level and in the schools may consider giving increased attention to the whole notion of professional development for faculty. The participants of this study encourage staff development that is professional, teacher initiated, curriculum and instruction focused, collaborative, participatory, and beneficial in knowledge, skill, and confidence building.

Teacher Motivation in the Twenty-First Century

Although the findings of this study do not support the same degree of concern for the future of education as is implied in the research originating in the United States, there is an apprehension expressed regarding the direction in which our education system seems to be headed. It would be beneficial to examine the applicability of some of the alternatives proposed by American educators. Some proposals discuss an alternative promotion structure based on accommodating the upward mobility of teachers and the formalization of guidelines for participative management. Others refer to merit pay plans, career ladders, differentiated staffing, and increased collaborative teaching designed to enrich work and enlarge teachers' responsibilities. Although the value of these alternatives is yet to be proven, this study appears to provide incentive for all educators to be searching for ways to improve the educational system for those involved in its organizational field. There is something to be said for ensuring that educators are prepared for what lies ahead in the twenty-first century.

For Future Research

While this study attempted to identify how a small number of principals perceived their role in motivating teachers, it did not set out to examine the activities of principals as they worked with staff to increase morale. This question might be considered in an observational study where the efforts and behaviors of principals are observed within the school setting.

As this study focused on five high school principals, other studies might involve principals at the elementary and junior high level to see if principals' perceptions regarding their role in teacher motivation differ to any extent.

While this study sought the principals' perceptions of their role in developing a motivated and committed staff, future studies might also attempt to examine how teachers view the principal's role in encouraging and maintaining motivation at the school level.

Although the five participants were selected from four school districts, there was little emphasis placed on determining the effects of district goals and expectations on teacher motivation. A future study might attempt to ascertain if in fact principals' motivational actions are a reflection of district-level direction.

Future research might also focus on the gender factor and how it relates to the management of schools. Of interest would be research to determine if men and women principals perform their roles differently.

All the participants in this study were male, and their perceptions may in fact reflect a certain orientation in their manner of influencing teacher motivation. Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) discussed some early work by Gross and Trask (1976) relating the gender of principals to the morale of their teachers.

Some of the participants of this study proposed that increased and improved staff professional development activities may be significant in facilitating and enhancing teacher motivation. A study which might attempt to determine the objectives and effectiveness of staff development programs would be valuable in helping to design strategies for improving teacher morale.

Concluding Statement

This researcher initially proposed to replicate a study completed at the post-secondary level on faculty vitality (Nicholson, 1988). After some brief discussions with high school administrators, it was determined that the term "vitality" was ambiguous and seemingly inappropriate in terms of the participants' frame of reference. Therefore, it became evident to the researcher that to carry out such a study could cause confusion. Any further research relating to motivation, already a varied and extensive area, necessitates clear intent and delineation.

By examining teacher motivation from the principals' point of view, I found it possible to compare their perceptions to the findings in the existing literature regarding motivation and leadership. The study emphasized that in order for educators to meet the challenges, opportunities, and changes that are occurring in education, the vital resource and potential of teachers needs to be recognized and utilized by improved efforts at teacher motivation. Discussions with these principals reinforced the idea that there are indeed available strategies and actions that can serve to enhance morale and to combat the pressures confronting teachers. Most importantly, the study identified the magnitude and complexity of what is involved in motivating faculty. The insight and understanding acquired from these five principals confirmed the importance of the principals' vision and beliefs and how these provide the framework within which principals work towards encouraging, maintaining, and enhancing teacher motivation.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

Interview Guide

1. How many years have you been an administrator? A high school principal?
2. Tell me a bit about how you view yourself as a principal. For example, what kinds of things do you think are characteristic of your role in terms of staff motivation and commitment?
3. Do you have an all-encompassing vision of what kind of teaching staff you would like to have working for you? In other words, what does a motivated staff mean for you?
4. Describe someone on staff whom you would consider to be motivated and committed. What specifically do they do?
5. What kinds of criteria do you use when selecting a teacher for your staff?
6. How do you determine if staff morale is down in your school? How do you get a feel for the staff climate?
7. What kinds of things do you do to motivate your staff? In which situations have you been successful in motivating your staff? (What actions or behaviors do you feel are important to model, if any? How do you encourage teacher professionalism, teacher involvement in decision making, a sense of staff well-being?)
8. Are there experiences or instances that come to mind when you haven't felt as successful as you would have liked to be in motivating your staff? (What about the complacent teacher, the maturing teacher, or the teacher close to retirement?)
9. Can you give me some examples of external factors to the school that in your opinion affect staff morale?

10. Describe for me some of the things that happen in schools that have the potential to affect staff morale either in a positive or a negative way.
11. As our discussion of staff motivation and commitment has progressed, have there been some larger issues that have presented themselves or come to mind that are related?
12. Is there anything else that you would like to share that you feel is relevant to our discussion that we didn't cover?

Follow-Up Interview with ___________

1. Do you have anything you want to add, delete, or change?

I would like to go over a few things to make sure I have covered everything:

2. You say staff motivation has little to do with age; what do you mean? Is age a factor in staff motivation (p. 1)?
3. The SRI approach--another principal mentioned it--is there somewhere I can get some additional information (p. 2)?
4. Elaborate a bit on "collage of different personalities in the department." Does this provide more of a strength (p. 4)?
5. Finish your sentence: "I think you have to personally demonstrate the desire . . ." (p. 6).
6. How does this statement relate to staff motivation and commitment: "So at any given point in time . . ." (p. 6)?
7. Comment further on "To me the gauge's the number . . ." (p. 7).
8. Elaborate on what you mean by "restless creative spirit." How does it fit into the issue of staff motivation and commitment (p. 8)?
9. You mentioned the need for some kind of statement, perhaps from the district level, outlining teacher responsibilities in terms of an expectation of continual growth. How do you see that affecting staff motivation and commitment (p. 13)?
10. Elaborate just a bit on how a school's reputation contributes to staff motivation and commitment (p. 15).
11. You mention societal factors. What about the teacher's personal life, the home: How do these factors affect staff motivation (p. 16)?

12. Discuss, if you can, the term "vitality" as it relates to the concept of staff motivation and commitment.
13. Tell me a little bit about your role at ________ in terms of staff motivation and commitment as it compares to the other schools in which you've been principal.

Appendix B

Correspondence

Name
Principal
School

Dear Participant:

Thank you for consenting to participate in my research project, "The Role of Principals in Affecting Staff Motivation and Commitment." The purpose of my study is to develop an understanding of what principals do to affect staff morale and commitment in their school.

Although there is a great deal of literature available related to the concept of motivation, there is very little information that focuses on the specific contribution a principal makes in building and developing a motivated and committed staff.

Your involvement in the study has been approved by our school district and my thesis advisor, Dr. Frank Peters. Your involvement will entail an interview of approximately one hour in length, followed by one or two shorter contacts to ensure clarification and understanding of the transcripts. In order to save time, the interview will be recorded on tape; however, if you object to this procedure, please do not hesitate to let me know. All information obtained from the interview will be kept confidential, and any data to be used in the final report will be returned to you first for perusal and permission.

I wish to assure you that no comments or statements will be attributed to you or your school district. At no time will participants or their schools be identified in the final document. Please be assured that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

To confirm your participation in the study, please complete the attached form. You can give me the form when I see you on Date and Time.

I appreciate your time and involvement and look forward to working with you in my study.

Yours truly,

Charlotte Corothers

April 28, 1989

Principal
High School

Dear Principal:

I know this is a busy time of year for high school principals--what with the business of staffing, graduation, exams, and planning for next year. Hopefully, you will allow me an hour of your time for a follow-up interview.

I have included a copy of the interview transcript for your perusal. In the margin areas I have highlighted points that I would like to clarify further or to have you elaborate on to ensure the accuracy of your intent. You are also encouraged to feel free to discuss any concerns you may have or to make additions or deletions as you see fit at this time. A note of caution: Do not be alarmed by the vast difference between the written and spoken word. Often it is a shock to read what one has said in the form of a conversation; somehow it just never looks quite right.

I will be contacting you in the next few days to arrange a convenient time for us to get together. Thank you for your ongoing participation in my research study.

Yours truly,

Charlotte Corothers